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ABSTRACT

Articles on individualization in English language learning, a bibliography and list of selected additions to the English Teaching Information Centre archives (October 1977 - April 1978), and a list of recent publications are presented. An introduction by Elizabeth Smyth and the following articles are included: "Autonomy, Self-Directed Learning and Individualization" by Leslie Dickinson; "Activity Options in Language Courses" by Marion Geddes; "Vocabulary Exercises Within an Individualised Study Programme" by A.P. Cowie; "Towards Individualisation: Organising Learning in an Institutionalised Setting" by J.C. Higgens; "Subject-Orientated Language Learning at Undergraduate Level" by C.J. Dodson; "English for Overseas Students" by Jon Green; "Aspects of Autonomous Learning" by Carolyn Henner-Stanchina and Philip Riley; and "Motivation, Materials, Manpower and Methods: Some Fundamental Problems in ESP" by Gerry Abbott. (SW)

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ELT documents

103-Individualisation in Language Learning

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INTRODUCTION

Most EFL teachers have come across the student who holds precise opinions, not only about his own language deficiencies, but also about the exact methods his teacher should use to overcome them. It is perhaps not quite so common an occurrence for the teacher to agree with his student and/or allow him to select his or her own remedy.

Seven of the papers in this edition discuss the concept of self-directed learning. It soon becomes obvious that this is not a teaching situation where a teacher can take a holiday from the writing of materials and lesson preparation. His work multiplies, for he needs to equip any number of separate resource rooms. His class, formerly united in one room and bound by a time-limit, now roam in and out of several rooms at leisure. Enough material must be available in each to give the student the opportunity of selecting exactly those materials he thinks will benefit him most. Nor can he abdicate from any responsibility of learning; he needs to apply himself to learn as much or as little as he considers he needs.

The practical workshop methodology, ie the 'nuts and bolts' of setting up an individualised learning system is discussed in four papers. Interspersed with these are three theoretical discussions, analyses of the educational processes involved in this mode of learning, and assessments of its value to the student. The eighth and final paper is not related to individualised learning, but is a comment on a subject treated in a previous edition of ELT Documents. Mr Abbott asks if the problems posed by ESP course design are so unwieldy as to inhibit effective teaching.

Leslie Dickinson examines the terms 'individualisation' and 'self-directed learning' and defines them from the student point of view as representing the difference between free and controlled learning: the first being self-imposed learning, and the second, learning imposed by the teacher. Far from introducing a new learning system, the writer considers this system to be making use of previous ideas and techniques. He emphasises the importance of this learning approach, and most significantly, he justifies the relatively large amount of teacher preparation time needed.

Moving from theory to action the second paper is a practical description of the work done at the British Council English Language Teaching Institute in devising and setting-up an individualised learning unit. Much emphasis is given

to the methodology work involved, eg, planning of materials and arrangement of sessions. Here it can be seen that the hardest and most demanding part of the whole process is the elaborate construction work required of the teacher.

A P Cowie from the University of Leeds gives an example of the pre-teaching research needed before planning an individualised course. His paper is a careful examination of verbal collocations, and the learner's approach to them. His observations are then made the basis for development of teaching materials.

J C Higgens and Judith Davies of the Oxford University Press English Language Teaching Development Unit at the Colchester Study Centre concentrate on the problems set by large groups of students of mixed ability. A great deal of consideration is given to the vexed question of whether streaming should reflect linguistic ability or specialist skill. Neither option having proved satisfactory, the group had to resort to individual 'programming' for each student.

The Research and Development Project on Subject Orientated Language Learning introduces an (almost) political note into the EFL field. A research officer has been appointed to the scheme at the Department of International Politics in the University College of Wales in Aberystwyth. The aim is to establish a language course leading to linguistic fluency, and the ultimate conversational goal, the use of foreign language under stress. This demands a technique (perhaps I should say technology) of presenting stimulated conditions of stress to the student. The scheme will finish with a graded series of problem-solving items. These will be derived from the identification of those concept clusters which have a high frequency of use.

Jon Green describes the use of a learning package where an error in a self-assessment exercise provides the starting point for the remedial exercise to be applied to an individual student. The package can be used by teachers to select material applicable to different groups, at different levels. The writer has so far designed the course only in terms of 'grammatical categories' and 'error-free exercises', nevertheless it is noteworthy as an attempt by a director of studies to grapple with a two-fold problem recurring more widely than is realised. The first difficulty was that his non-English-speaking students were following a course for native English speakers; secondly, neither time nor manpower was available to provide supplementary teaching. The director of studies in this case is a Lecturer in computer engineering, with no experience of or training in English language teaching. He describes a time-saving system that can be programmed to suit a number of different schemes, can be applied using any materials, and can be used as extended individualised teaching when there is a shortage of staff.

The article by Carolyn Henner-Stanchina and Philip Riley describes the pioneer work done by the CRAPEL (Centre de Recherch et d'Applications Pedagogiques en Langues) in the field of individualisation. The emphasis is on learning rather than teaching because, as the founder of CRAPEL (Yves Chalon) says, 'in a world in constant movement, teaching can no longer be satisfied with simply passing on packaged knowledge but must begin to provide people with the means of acquiring this knowledge for themselves'. For this reason, CRAPEL intends to function as a resource centre as well as a training centre.

In this edition an attempt has been made to collect a number of papers illustrating different opinions and approaches to the subject. Most of the papers represent developments in relatively new areas of teaching methodology. It is to be hoped that they may give rise to further comment of communication from places where similar ideas and schemes may be under investigation.

E A Smyth

We are hoping to include a correspondence section in future issues of ELT Documents. Comments arising from articles in current issues will therefore be most welcome. Please address comments to ETIC, The British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN

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AUTONOMY, SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING AND INDIVIDUALISATION

Leslie Dickinson
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Introduction

That the terms autonomy, self-directed learning (SDL) and individualisation overlap in their reference is very obvious. The extent of the overlap and the ways in which they differ is not at all obvious. In this paper I shall attempt to substantiate the following (rather tentative) conclusions.

1 That the term individualised instruction and/or learning, is used to describe such diverse programmes as to be useless for our purpose. Furthermore, it misses the point.

2 That autonomy represents the upper limit of self-directed learning measured on a notional scale from total direction to full freedom. Consequently, autonomy is one of a set of possibilities within the larger category of self-directed learning.

The task of substantiating these arguments is largely one of definition and my attempts at formulating satisfactory definitions have inevitably led me into the literature of these areas; some of these writings are only tenuously related to defining a particular area, yet they discuss much that is of interest in this field – particularly in self-directed learning. Consequently, in addition to arguing the points made above I will review a selection of the literature in SDL. There are few references in this literature to language learning; most of the writings are concerned either with education in general or with subjects other than foreign languages (FL). A major theme running through writings on SDL is, however, of great potential relevance to FL learning. This is the close relation between SDL and the affective domain. I have, consequently, examined a selection of the literature concerned with affective variables in FL learning; and finally I review two papers which describe FL learning/teaching methods which make a deliberate attempt to control affective variables and to build into the methods a degree of self-directed learning.

Individualised instruction/learning (II)

Logan (1973) offers as a minimal definition of II the situation in which

> 'the teacher provides materials and activities with which students can work 'independently', thus releasing the teacher to minister to individual needs. (p.15).

The period of time over which this is done is, of course, crucial. There is little new in a teacher telling the class to do exercises fifteen to twenty-five in the classroom! Logan recognises this and adds that

> 'in an individualised *programme*, the whole thrust of instruction is in this direction; the classroom structure is *designed* to allow this type of independent activity to have priority in importance and time over the more synchronized activity that traditionally has dominated the classroom scene.' (p.15).

In an earlier publication (Logan 1970) he describes how the term individualisation has been applied to programmes varying from 'the traditional 'lock-step' operation' with added individual or small group help, to correspondence courses and totally independent study. He then states:

> 'More closely approaching *true* individualisation (my italics) are those programmes offering individualised contracts to each student. Sequential learning packets which can be combined for different students in different ways: or even essentially random learning approaches.' (p.1&2).

Making a similar point rather more strongly, Gibbons (1971) describes various possibilities some of which are labelled 'individualised' and some of which are not. He goes on:

> 'Together such programmes constitute a widely diverse family. They are based on different interpretations of individualisation. They are inspired by different philosophies and theories, influenced by different technologies and expertise, and confounded by the ambiguity of their label. In fact, the term individualised instruction programme is used to describe such a varied assortment of curricula that it is no longer a useful, restrictive category of instructional methods. It likely never was.'

The first conclusion I was attempting to substantiate was precisely this – that the term II was used to describe such a wide variety of methods as to be useless. My approach to substantiating it was simply to quote other writers who say the same thing. However, even a cursory glance through the literature on II will show this diversity very clearly, and to presently attempt to enumerate a reasonable cross-section of this diversity would be very time consuming and very boring.

It is, of course, possible for a theorist to formulate a more restrictive definition of II and work within that. For example Altman (1971) adduces four characteristics of II which are, to him, essential. They are:

a Each student is allowed to progress through his curriculum materials at his own pace.

b Each student is tested only when he is prepared to be tested. (Not all students will be tested simultaneously.)

c When a student needs help, he works individually with his teacher, or with some other resource person in the classroom in a tutorial manner, and

d each student is aware of the nature of his learning task and knows what he must demonstrate and with what degree of accuracy he must demonstrate it to receive credit for his work and to be able to move ahead in his material. (p.89).

Altman's characterisation highlights the central contrast between traditional classroom instruction and II, and that is, of course, breaking the *lock-step*, and allowing learners to progress at varying rates suitable to each individual. However, this is *not* the central contrast between autonomy/SDL and other approaches to learning. Autonomy/SDL *entail* individualisation; its use is never in doubt; it is a necessary condition for autonomy/SDL. But it is by no means a sufficient condition. There are many individualised programmes which are the antithesis of self direction and autonomy; and so, from this point of view too, the term II is not useful for our purposes. The contrast we are concerned with is between *freedom* and *control*, between autonomous/SD learning and externally directed, teacher directed learning. And this contrast is not restricted to matters like the student's pace through curriculum materials and when he will be tested, but includes the student's choice of what he will learn, how he will learn, when he will learn, and, indeed, *if* he will learn.

It appears, then, that the term individualised instruction/learning is not useful for our purposes for two reasons. Firstly, it is used so widely that it no longer delimits a useful restrictive category of instructional methods; and secondly, because the contrast central to those concerned with autonomy/SDL is not that of working at an individual pace, etc (conditions which are, in any case entailed by autonomous/SD learning), but the contrast between the extremes of total freedom of choice in curricula, materials, ways of learning, examinations, etc, and total external direction in these areas.

Autonomous learning and self-directed learning

Autonomous learning – or autonomy – is (of course) the term used by the CRAPEL to describe their learning – and learner-centred strategy. Its major characteristics are set out in Stanchina (1975 b). The features she highlights are that the learner determines his own goals (aims and objectives), he also determines his mode of learning, the materials he will use and the pace of the intake of material. Furthermore the learner monitors his own performance and evaluates his own proficiency. She concludes:

> 'Autonomy is an experiment in how learning can be freed from the bounds of any institution, and in how the individual can reclaim control of and responsibility for his or her own education, while investigating the opportunities to learn from a variety of authentic sources.'

(How this system operates is described in a number of papers from the CRAPEL including Riley (1974), Stanchina (1975 a, 1975 b), Abe & Smith (1976)

Describing the salient characteristics of SDL is more difficult, since the term tends to be used differently by different writers. Furthermore, the use of the term self-directed learning frequently constitutes an act of faith, and (perhaps, consequently,) is rarely accompanied by a clear description.

Where a clear description is given, however, there is frequently a marked similarity between SDL and autonomy – which would lead one to suppose that these are two names for the same phenomenon. Boud and Sidery (1976) describe SDL as follows:

> 'We understand self-directedness to imply maximum autonomy for the individual concomitant with concern for the autonomy of others, and the use of each others' resources in sensitive and effective ways.'
>
> 'Underlying this definition of self-directed learning is an assumption of what it means to be an educated person. The assumption is that an educated person is one who can identify his own needs, set his own goals, develop strategies for meeting his needs and be able to monitor his own action in this process. He can co-operate with others to obtain mutual support and assistance so that each may gain fulfilment.' (p.2).

These definitions/descriptions of autonomy and SDL suggest, as I noted above, that they are two labels for the same phenomenon. But I wish to offer another possibility. I suggest that what Boud and Sidery are describing is in fact autonomy in the CRAPEL sense, and that autonomy is only one of a set of possibilities within SDL. In fact, I shall argue that autonomy represents the upper limit of self-directed learning measured on a notional scale from fully directed to fully autonomous learning.

The CRAPEL view of autonomy has developed out of the need to provide FL learning possibilities for adult learners with special (if common) problems. Stanchina (1975 a) says:

> 'What we are trying to do at the CRAPEL is to adopt an alternative teaching strategy that recognises the special conditions of adult learners:
>
> their jobs do not allow them to attend classes with any regularity . . .
>
> they must devote time to their families.
>
> they live too far away from the university . . .
>
> their timing does not coincide with the courses scheduled for an entire year.
>
> their needs (are not appropriate to a conventional class organisation).

some adults prefer to keep away from the classroom atmosphere . . .

(some learners) simply need a maintenance programme.'

(Brackets indicate my re-phrasing)

The strategy evolved is one in which 'ideally the learner eventually becomes responsible for the whole of his instructional process, including the provision of materials.' (Riley and Stanchina (1975)).

This strategy is the outcome of two preliminary stages – the systematic stage – traditional classroom teaching, and the non-systematic stage – a period of training for full autonomy. The learner then passes into the autonomous stage, using appropriate materials for his FL learning. (Riley 1974).

As I understand the papers available to me, the learner should make a linear progression through the stages, in one direction only. There appears to be no formal recognition of the need of some learners to move back and forth through the three stages – seeking further support when he feels the need for it in the systematic or non-systematic stages. However, some provision is made to give support through the 'helper' system. But the support has limits as Stanchina (1976) says:

'Although the helper must always be available to see the learners, abuses must be avoided, for sessions that are too frequent leave learners no time to work independently, and may therefore increase their dependence on the helper and slow down their 'autonomization'.'

Earlier in the same paper she observes: 'Even though learners will claim to accomplish more in less time with the helper, . . . they must understand that only working independently (of the helper) will allow them to develop the learning techniques most effective for them.' (both quotes p.7).

I get an impression of an 'all or nothing' philosophy from these papers. Either learners achieve autonomy or they fail. As I stressed above the CRAPEL are working with learners who have very severe limitations on their availability and time scheduling, and this attitude may be a necessity with those learners. However, not all learners – not even all adult learners – have these severe limitations, and so – for others, – broader, more flexible programmes can be offered without compromising the ideal of self-direction.

A man (or woman) can be self-directing in his sexual life without being forced into auto-eroticism. It may even be that he gets his kicks out of subjugating himself to his partner and consequently chooses to do this – chooses to relinquish his freedom. Is this no longer self-directing? If I wish to become a competent carpenter, I may choose to read books and practise on my own, or I may choose to join a class in carpentry. In my view, both are examples

of self-directed learning. The vital factors are the individual specification of functional aims, and the free choice of means of achieving those aims. The process of achieving learning objectives is not one of making an initial decision – self-direction or other direction and then progressing linearly; it is rather a progression along a path which has frequent forks – some many-pronged. The defining characteristic of self-directed learning in my view, is that the learner makes a free choice at each of these forks. This free choice may in fact be a choice to relinquish his autonomy over a particular stretch for a particular purpose.

A third example illustrates this. Suppose you were engaged in research in semantics – research which you had chosen to do because of your interest in the field. At some point in your reading you would discover that certain aspects of semantic theories were often expressed in symbolic logic; furthermore, if you did not understand symbolic logic, you would find that there was much in semantics that you could not follow. It happens that at just this time, you discover that there is a course in symbolic logic just beginning. Also, it is held at a time during the week when you are free. Thus, you have the choice of going along to the course, or of going to the library and finding *Introductions to Symbolic Logic.* Whichever path is chosen, the choice – and the learning approach – remains self-directed. In one path, however, the autonomy of the learner is maintained. In the other it is partially relinquished, for a particular purpose.

Diagram 1 shows the choice of paths for individuals through a particular learning programme. This model attempts to reflect the reality of most learning programmes in that self-direction can enter in – or be relinquished – at various points. This is indicated in the diagram by an instruction to move up (or down) to a numbered node-point. Thus, even though a student – a school child for example – may be externally directed to learn English, or French (hereafter X), there is still scope for self-direction within the learning programme. Alternatively, though another student may make a self-directed decision to study X he may, for example, choose to relinquish his autonomy in particular areas, in varying degrees. Thus, he may choose to work in a group of self-directing individuals. In so doing, he is pre-empting his full freedom of choice at other node-points. For example, the choices of when to study and where to study are no longer fully autonomous since agreement must be reached with others. Similarly if a student chooses to follow a class for some aspect of his study – say the phonology of the target language – then he may relinquish a proportion of his freedom to choose materials.

In this diagram the heavily marked path represents autonomy, which is, as I earlier remarked the upper limit of self-directed learning. Conversely the lower limits are set by the student who freely chooses to be fully directed throughout his study of X. This may be a *reductio ad absurdem* argument

against the model. It appears necessary to establish the limiting case of self-direction somewhere above this level, but how this is done, and indeed if it is valid, I am not sure.

To conclude this section then, I have argued that autonomy and SDL differ in that autonomy is one of many possibilities within SDL. It is the upper limit of SDL. The defining characteristic of SDL is that the learner makes free choices at each of a series of node points in the learning path. Where all of these choices are made freely, we have fully self-directed learning, where only some are freely made we have *some degree* of self-directed learning.

A glance at the literature

Except for the very interesting work going on in the CRAPEL, I know of few reported studies in self-directed learning in FL learning. Writings on SDL in other fields, however, serve as test cases for the definition I have offered above, and I shall quote two of these. I shall then consider some of the educational research and thinking which supports SDL, including, especially, work relating affective variables with learning. This work leads naturally to a consideration of two language learning/teaching methods which attempt to control some of these affective variables by building into the method a proportion of self-directed learning.

The first of the SDL reports describes an introductory course in psychology conducted by V E Faw, reported in Rogers (1969). The course covered five aspects of human psychology: (1) persons, (2) interactions, (3) procedures, (4) content and (5) institutional press, though the emphasis was on the first two. The main interest in this course is the structure set up by Faw to facilitate it. For example he offers the following arrangements of the class. An initial interview with the instructor to sort out 'the dynamics between student and teacher'. This can be followed up – at the students choice – by working through a programmed set of ten lessons in interpersonal relations. Second, half the class time is spent on student centred sessions. These 'may be of two general kinds: first, those in which student-centred discussions are prominent and second, those in which students present their research, demonstrations, reviews of journal articles, etc.' The role of the instructor here is in helping to maintain students' academic freedom and inner freedom by listening respectfully and acceptingly. Third, in the other half of the class time, the position is reversed. The instructor voices his ideas and thoughts while the students play the role of therapist, helping to maintain the instructor's academic freedom and inner freedom by listening and responding in an understanding manner.

Though credit points are given for attending these class periods, no penalties are suffered for missing some or all the classes. Indeed, students are

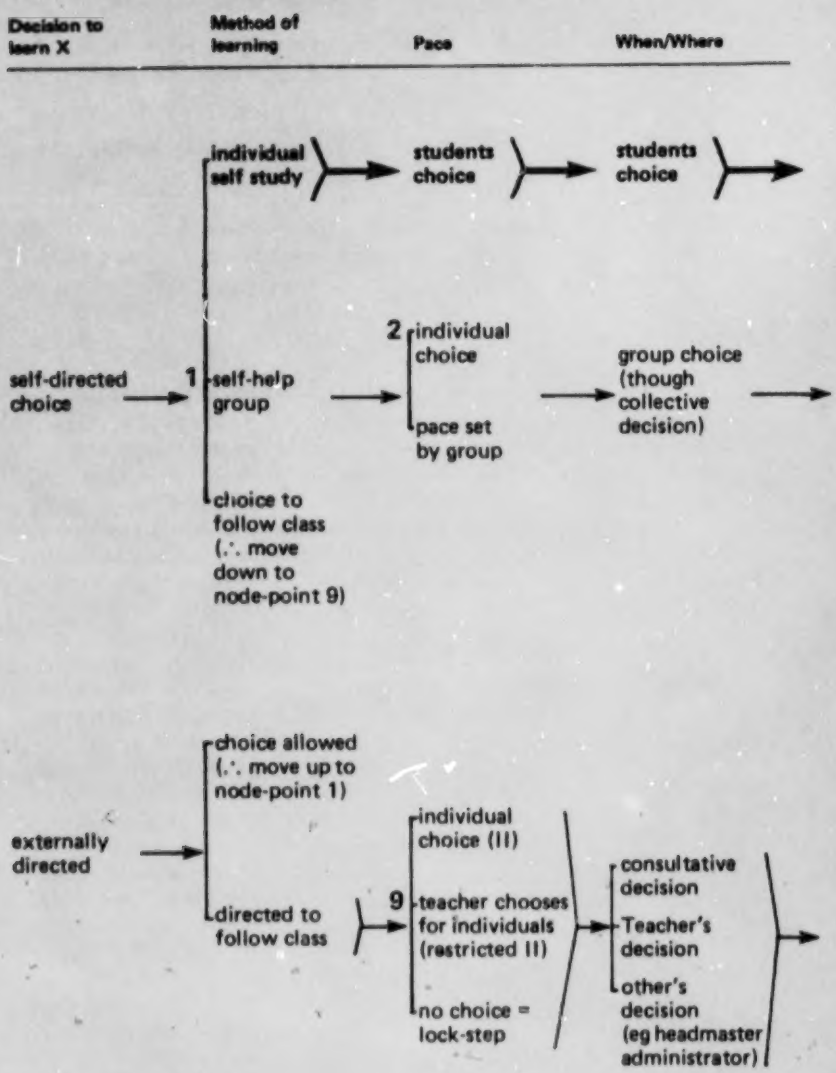
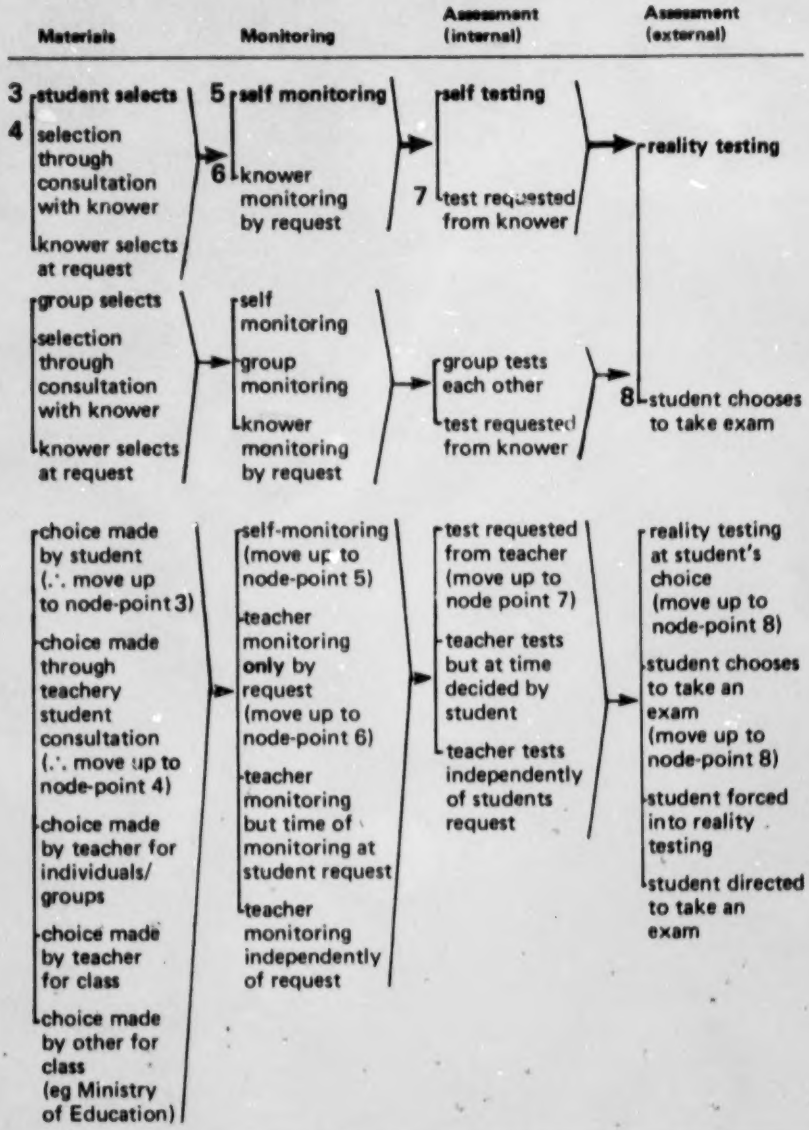


Diagram 1 Sketch of a model to estimate degree and loci of self-direction in individuals.


Materials
Monitoring
Assessment (internal)
Assessment (external)
3
student selects
4
selection through consultation with knower
knower selects at request
5
self monitoring
6
knower monitoring by request
self testing
7
test requested from knower
reality testing
group selects
selection through consultation with knower
knower selects at request
self monitoring
group monitoring
knower monitoring by request
group tests each other
test requested from knower
8
student chooses to take exam
choice made by student (∴ move up to node-point 3)
choice made through teachery student consultation (∴ move up to node-point 4)
choice made by teacher for individuals/ groups
choice made by teacher for class
choice made by other for class (eg Ministry of Education)
self-monitoring (move up to node-point 5)
teacher monitoring only by request (move up to node-point 6)
teacher monitoring but time of monitoring at student request
teacher monitoring independently of request
test requested from teacher (move up to node point 7)
teacher tests but at time decided by student
teacher tests independently of students request
reality testing at student's choice (move up to node-point 8)
student chooses to take an exam (move up to node-point 8)
student forced into reality testing
student directed to take an exam

encouraged not to attend classes when they believe that the work they would otherwise do would be more useful. Furthermore, the timetable of class-sessions is 'self-directed' by both students and instructors. A 'sign-up sheet' is posted on a notice board and students and instructors book class time for presentations.

Faw goes on to offer sixteen 'Optional Responses Instrumental in Achieving Goals'. These include

1 Initial interview with the instructor (mentioned above).

2 Statement of goals.

3 Review of Journal Articles and presentation in Writing.

4 Research proposals . . . 'Three levels of proposals are acceptable.
Level 1: the mere idea of 'I wonder what would happen if we did this'.
Level 2: the idea plus a survey (of previous work).
Level 3: the idea with a survey of literature plus the experimental design to be used in testing the hypothesis.

5 Individual experiments.

6 Group projects.

8 'Reading of assignments and taking examinations over readings . . . Students may choose not to take examinations; however, these examinations constitute one of the greatest single sources of credit at a minimal amount of effort . . .'

16 'Self evaluation. The student may review the work he has done during the course and evaluate it in terms of how meaningful the experience was to him in relation to the goals he set for himself.

I have described this at some length to emphasize the point that a programme in self-directed learning is not necessarily one in which the student is left entirely to himself and his own resources. He can be offered a substantial degree of support, especially in the area of 'learning structure'. However, he is free at each point to choose within the structure offered, or to choose to ignore it. Notice also, of course, that this course operates within the credit system, though there are many options open for gaining credit points.

The second report is of a very different kind. It is taken from Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (1974) and describes what the author considers to be an ideal university. I precede it, however, with a statement of ideals made by Carl Rogers (Rogers 1969) in his book on SDL *Freedom to Learn*. Rogers lists five implications of his thinking on teaching and learning. I report the first 4.

a . . . we would do away with teaching. People would get together if they wished to learn.

b We would do away with examinations. They measure only the inconsequential type of learning.

c We would do away with grades and credits for the same reasons.

d We would do away with degrees as a measure of competence partly for the same reason. Another reason is that a degree marks an end or a conclusion of something, and a learner is only interested in the continuing process of learning. (p.154)

What would be the results of such momentous moves? Pirsig (so far as I know, quite independently of Rogers) offers the following suggestion. He describes an imaginary university – the Church of Reason – which awards no degrees – and consequently work is not graded. It exists to enable people to learn. Pirsig suggests that, typically, a student attending this university would initially react to the freedom by neglecting to do any work. His lack of reading and thinking would result in the classes becoming progressively less meaningful. Soon the student would realise that he was not learning much and then, because of other pressures – eg social life – he would stop attending classes altogether, and then stop attending the university. In this ideal world, neither the university nor society would censure dropping out, and in any case, there would be freedom to re-enter the university again whenever the student wished. It is right, argues Pirsig, that the student should drop-out. He was not at the university to learn, but to get a degree.

This imaginary student might then get a job as a mechanic. He might develop a real interest in engines, perhaps modifying them, then beginning to build his own. Further, he might realise that to design an engine well he needed to learn a great deal more about the theoretical aspects of engine design. So, he goes back to the university – but this time he is primed to learn. He does not want a degree. He wants to learn about engines. Pirsig continues:

> 'So he would come back to our degreeless and gradeless school, but with a difference. He'd no longer be a grade-motivated person. He'd be a knowledge motivated person. He would need no external pushing to learn. His push would come from inside. He'd be a free man. He wouldn't need a lot of discipline to shape him up. In fact, if the instructors assigned him were slacking on the job, he would be likely to shape *them* up by asking rude questions . . .'
>
> 'Motivation of this sort, once it catches hold, is a ferocious force . . . he wouldn't stop with rote engineering information. Physics and mathematics . . . Metallurgy and electrical engineering would come up for attention.

> And . . . he would be likely to branch out into other theoretical areas that weren't directly related to machines but had become part of a newer, larger goal. This larger goal wouldn't be the imitation of education in Universities today, glossed over and concealed by grades and degrees that give the impression that something is happening when, in fact, almost nothing is going on. It would be the real thing.' (p.191).

Here we have a vision of a self-directed learning situation, but one in the context of certain aspects of a university structure. The imaginary student may attend classes, but who would say he is not self-directed?

Attempts at justifying a self-directed learning approach (in contrast to a directed learning approach) can be made by considering three sorts of experimental studies. The first group relates to McGregor's dichotomy of how human being are perceived. His Theory X and Theory Y. The second set of studies compares the results of SDL programmes with those of directed programmes, and the tendency is to find few differences in achievement. Finally, a consideration of work examining the relationship of affective variables with learning on the one hand, and the relation of affective variables with SDL on the other offers support for SDL approaches.
It would be misleading to describe what follows as a review of the relevant literature, since this implies that what is offered is carefully considered on the basis of full information. What is offered here, in fact, are indications of areas of research worth, in my opinion, further, more careful, examination. They are almost all taken from secondary sources – ie other authors' reviews of research, and I have had no opportunity to assess carefully the quality of the research reported.

McGregor (1961) hypothesizes that people are viewed in one of two ways with respect to their motivation to work. (His hypotheses originally referred to American executives but can easily be adapted to students.)

The traditional education view of students (McGregor's Theory X) is that they:

1 Dislike and avoid study.

2 Must be coerced, controlled, directed and threatened with punishment to get them to direct their efforts toward achievement of educational goals.

3 Prefer to be directed, wish to avoid responsibility, have little ambition, and want security above all.

McGregor argues that though traditional educators perceive students in this way, it is the fact that they are perceived in this way (and have been over

many years) which leads students to behave so. McGregor argued that the converse view is more realistic. Thus, his Theory Y states that students:

1 Regard mental and physical work as natural as play or rest.

2 Exercise self control and self-direction.

3 Are committed to objectives because of the rewards of achievement.

4 Accept and seek responsibility.

5 Exercise a high degree of imagination, ingenuity and creativity in solving problems.

(Bockman and Bockman (1972) p.56).

McGregor argued that these were self-fulfilling prophecies. Thus those 'teachers' who believe Theory Y, and who demonstrate their belief in their activities tend to find that their students manifest the attitudes described by Theory Y. On the other hand, those teachers who believe Theory X similarly tend to have their beliefs confirmed by the evidence.

Rogers (1969) reports a number of studies tending to support this view. The most conclusive (Macdonald and Zaret 1966) concludes that 'teachers who are interested in process, and facilitative in their interactions, produce self-initiated and creative responses in their students. (Whereas) Teachers who are interested in evaluation of students produce passive, memorized, 'eager to please' responses from their students'. (p.118). Beach (1974), in a study of self-directed learning, found 'clustering . . . among a number of variables, demonstrating the value of the free interaction found in the small, self-directed student group. For example, as rated by the participants, quality of study, quantity of study, critical thinking done in the course, seeing applications and implications of the study material, and motivation to meet extra times as a group clustered together.' (p.193).

In further support of Theory Y, and also indicating how students learn how to learn, Gruber and Weitman (1962) (reported in Beach op cit) conclude that 'placing a major responsibility on the student for his own education has real possibilities for developing attitudes towards learning which result in the students continuing search for knowledge after the formal classroom experience is over'.

An important, if negative, justification of SDL is its effectiveness in leading to learning in comparison with more traditional methods. The indications are that on courses judged as successful by other criteria there is little or no significant difference from conventional approaches on such measures as

examination results, other measures of quantity of material learnt, coverage of material, attendance and so on.

Williams (1930) for example conducted an experiment in SDL over a period of 6 months with delinquent children in USA. After giving details of the gains in 'educational age' and other changes he says 'This experiment is interesting chiefly for the fact that it seems to indicate that a group of delinquent boys of varying ages and capacities will, if given an opportunity and supervision, improve more in educational age when left alone than they will under ordinary schoolroom conditions with formal instruction.' (p.718).

Faw, whose programme was reported on above, carefully observed the effects of the programme compared with traditional approaches. His observations are reported in Rogers (1969) P. 45. He reports no significant differences in attendance between the SDL programme and the conventional one (percentage attendance of 4 x 35 students in conventional courses with obligatory attendance – 87.2%. In SDL courses with optional attendance – 86.8%). There were similarly no significant differences in achievement on objective type examinations.

Beach (1974) reports similar finding from his own experiments with SDL. However, he adds another dimension.

> 'It is significant in itself that students in the experimental self-directed study groups did not suffer in course content learning from being deprived of the classroom and being placed in the interactive, instructionless learning setting. At the same time, they appear to have profited more in terms of 'other desirable outcomes' in the course and, as indicated in other ratings and written comments, found the group experience rewarding and satisfying.'

The third group of studies relevant to a justification of SDL are those concerned with links between affective variables and learning.[2] For example, Titone (1973) discusses the importance of personality factors (sociability, life-style) in language learning aptitude. He also reports on Curran's (1972) observation (also made by other people) that during learning to speak an FL they become anxious and feel threatened. Curran sees a similarity between this state of mind and that of the client in psychotherapy. (He follows the similarity through by adopting some of the counselling techniques from psychotherapy into the language learning process. This is reported more fully below.)

Brown (1974) also mentions Curran in his discussion of the affective variable of inhibition – which he suggests, 'may be one of the key obstacles to any learning which necessitates communication or interaction with another person'. 'Ego' is also suggested as another important affective variable in the FL learning process. According to Brown, 'The self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence of the leanguage learner could have everything to do with

success in learning a language . . . Any language acquisition process that results in meaningful learning for communication involves some degree of identity conflict . . .' (p.233).

Arising from this is the hypothesis that the reduction, in the learning situation, of such factors as threat to the learner's ego, inhibition and so on may facilitate the learning of language.[3]

Rogers (op cit) argues that there are important connections between types of teacher attitudes and the reduction or increase of the factors noted above. He reports work done by Schmuck (1963) for example, who attempted to show 'that in classrooms where pupils perceive their teachers as understanding them, there is likely to be a more diffuse liking structure among the pupils'. This means, according to Rogers, that 'where the teacher is empathic . . . liking and affection are more evenly diffused throughout the group'. Rogers goes on to discuss a later study (1966) in which Schmuck 'has shown that among students who are highly involved in their peer group significant relationships exist between actual liking status, on the one hand, and utilization of abilities, attitude toward self and attitude toward school on the other hand'. Rogers interprets this (and other evidence) as indicating

> 'that in an understanding classroom climate where the teacher is more empathic, every student tends to feel liked by all the others, to have a more positive attitude towards himself and toward school. If he is highly involved with his peer group (and this appears probable in such a classroom climate), he also tends to utilize his abilities more fully in his school achievement.' (p.118).

Further support for this is obtained from another area – that of psychotherapy. The research findings of Barrett–Lennard (1962) indicate that 'if, in therapy, the client perceives his therapist as real and genuine, as one who likes, prizes, and empathically understands him, self-learning and therapeutic change are facilitated'.

La Forge (1971) commenting on Bradford (1960) highlights the conflict situations which develop when the teacher dominates and controls class activities. 'Basically, parts of the class are at war with other parts' insofar as 'each student tends to be in a competitive situation – winner or loser in the learning game.' This is a common experience of anyone who has taught in a traditional classroom setting. Pupils working together are perceived as cheating (What? Whom?). Assignments, tests and examinations are used to establish rank order among the learners, and for the pupil, the important fact is not what he can learn about his own learning from the results, but his position in the rank.

The traditional, teacher dominated, classroom then, tends to increase negative affective factors. How might a self-directed learning situation differ from this?

Firstly there ceases to be a set of common objectives towards which every student is working in competition with every other student. Students may work individually, or together in groups, to specify their objectives, and they are responsible for selecting the materials for the achievement of those objectives. As I have tried to show above, this need not be totally autonomous, but can be within a supportive structural framework of options – always including the possibility of particular students choosing not to work within this framework (see, for example, the Faw programme). Furthermore, much of the threat, anxiety and competition can be taken out of assessment. External examinations may remain, of course, (if only to validate the SDL programme in contrast to directed courses), but internal assessment can be based on a series of options worked out between student and facilitator,[4] and different forms of assessment may well be chosen by different groups or individuals.

The role of the facilitator is of great importance. Firstly, of course, anyone who gets himself into such a position is already converted to McGregor's Theory Y, and so is already doing a great deal to reduce tensions and conflict and to facilitate learning. Secondly, he would 'regard himself as a flexible resource to be utilized by the group . . . He makes himself available as a counsellor, lecturer and adviser, a person with experience within the field. He wishes to be used by individual students, and by the group, in the ways which seem most meaningful to them insofar as he can be comfortable in operating in the ways they wish.' (Rogers, 1969, p.165).

As I observed above, there are few reports of SDL schemes in FL learning in the literature. However, reports of two unusual language learning/teaching methods have highly relevant features. Gattegno's method – 'The Silent Way' (1972) is reviewed by Stevick (1974). Gattegno states five basic principles of learning.

1 Teaching is subordinate to learning.

2 Learning is not imitation or drill.

3 In learning, the mind equips itself by its own working.

4 The mind draws on its previous experiences.

5 The teacher must stop interfering with the learning activity.

In language teaching by the silent way, the teacher produces each new input 'very clearly'. The students do 90% of the talking, with the teacher remaining almost completely silent. 'In the case of a correct response . . . the student must learn to do without the overt approval of the teacher. Instead, he must

concentrate on developing and then satisfying his own 'inner criteria'. This means that the teacher is supposed to react never verbally and very little non-verbally to a correct response.'

Mistakes (errors) appear to be used positively, both affectively and pedagogically. 'The student who made the mistake has 'stuck his neck out', acting vicariously for the whole group. The content of the mistake is an invaluable clue to where students are in the development of their 'inner criteria', and so provides previous guidance for the teacher's next step.'

The emphasis placed on the development of 'inner criteria' has important relevance to SDL and the need to develop self-monitoring. The teacher's reaction to correct utterances appears to be designed to encourage self-dependancy in the students, both in terms of their 'inner-criteria' and in the development of self-confidence. The importance of the supportive group, independent of the teacher is hinted at in the section on erroros.

The second method relevant to SDL is that described in Curran, C A, *Counselling – Learning: A Whole-Person Model for Education* (1972). Curran's work is reported more accessibly in La Forge (1971) and Stevick (1973). In this method the principal activity is learner-directed free conversation, right from the very beginning. The students, called 'clients', sit in a closed circle facing one another. The 'counsellors' ('knowers' – people who know the target language) are outside the circle. In the first stage, a client will decide what he wants to say and says it aloud in the L^1; he receives it back from the counsellor in the TL, 'reflected . . . in a warm, accepting tone.' The client then repeats it in the TL. 'After 2 to 3 hours clients usually begin to speak about topics that really matter to them, including their language fears and insecurities. This breakthrough makes possible the eventual establishment of feelings of security and belonging, and conversation begins to flow more freely.'

This is the first of five stages. The second is the stage of self-assertion, where the clients begin to try out TL elements directly. The counsellor gives help when he perceives it as necessary. In the third stage – the birth stage – the clients operate mainly in the TL. The counsellor keeps quiet unless help is positively requested by a client. In the next stage – the reversal stage – the clients are now sufficiently secure in their new language identities to accept correction from the counsellor whenever errors occur. Finally; the independent stage – the counsellors become fully integrated into the group, freely intervening not only to offer correction but also to improve style.

The client is free to shift at will from one stage to another, in either direction. In the early stages the client resolves his anxiety through total trust in and commitment to the knower. 'He thus abandons . . . something of his old self.

Soon, however, a new self begins to develop . . . This 'new self' inevitably runs into conflicts with the knower's self, but in the later stages these conflicts are resolved and the 'new self' completes the transition from embryo to adulthood.' (Stevick p.264).

The deliberate attempt by Curran to use his experience from psychotherapy relates to certain aspects of the facilitators role in SDL. Also, of course, the therapy is 'client-centred' in that the clients make the running so far as what is being learnt, and what help is given from counsellors. This is SDL within a fairly well-defined structure.

These methods offer suggestions of ways in which SDL can be incorporated into FL learning. They are different in many respects from the approach taken by the CRAPEL but they seem to me to fit into the description of SDL I offered above.

Notes

1 Logan, is of course, begging the question here.

2 I am grateful to David Carver, Scottish Centre for Education Overseas for drawing my attention to many of the papers mentioned in this section.

3 Also, of course, such an hypothesis gets strong support from common sense.

4 The terms 'teacher' or 'instructor' are not suitable in SDL for evident reasons.

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ACTIVITY OPTIONS IN LANGUAGE COURSES

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Background

The British Council's English Language Teaching Institute in London (ELTI) includes among its commitments intensive courses of different kinds for foreign students. [illegible]te 1974, notes of an account by John Roberts of the *Session Libre*, wh[illegible] had been conceived and executed on recent EFL courses in France; were circulated among ELTI staff, and when the design for a forthcoming ELTI course was undergoing revision it was decided to include a modified form of the *Session Libre*. This paper records ELTI's debt to the *Session Libre*, and describes its modification and inclusion as a component, renamed Activity Options, of ELTI's intensive courses since summer 1975.

Readers are strongly recommended to refer to Roberts' full account of the *Session Libre*,[1] of which only a brief description is possible here. In the academic year 1972–3, the *Session Libre* was introduced into English courses at the Institut Universitaire de Technologie in Nancy (IUT) as an alternative to the existing intensive course component. English language courses at IUT had for some years been organised on a mixed extensive-intensive pattern: a student might, for example, attend 2½ hours of extensive tuition per week and a three-day intensive session once every term. Initially, twenty conventional class hours were telescoped into these intensive sessions, for which students were graded linguistically, but dissatisfaction on several counts with this approach led to the reformation of the sessions as *Sessions Libres*. During a *Session Libre* students were free to choose from 6 basic activities: press, films, TV, games, tape library and language laboratory. Each activity was set up in a separate room and, within minimal constraints and certain project requirements, students were free to engage in them whenever and for however long they wished.

The first ELTI course on which Activity Options were offered as a component was an annual six-week pre-sessional course for foreign scholars newly arrived in Britain and about to embark on further academic studies in British institutions. Hitherto, the need of these students for rapid improvement in general oral-aural skills had been met with materials from ELTI's extensive tape library. With the increasing awareness of a parallel need for improvement of skills in academic English, materials based on academic texts or recorded lecturettes were being introduced, and in 1975 it was decided to rationalise this EAP input in the revised course design.

The revised design included four components. In the first week, all students

were graded linguistically to study materials based on orientation: local (ie orientation to London and the immediate locality), social (eg orientation to procedures in banks, post offices and shops)[2], and pedagogic (ie familiarisation with what, to many of the students, was the novelty of ELTI's approach to the teaching of oral-aural skills). In the second and third weeks, the same groups studied a predominantly structure-based syllabus, using tapes designed at ELTI for integrated classroom presentation and language laboratory practice.[3]

In the remaining three weeks, students continued these graded 'general' English classes in the afternoons, but were re-grouped for the morning sessions according to their academic disciplines; these, on the 1975 course, consisted (with a few uncomfortable exceptions!) of engineering, veterinary science, economics, urban planning and foreign service. Materials for these sessions included academic topics presented through the media of text and audio- and/or video-tape, related exercises, and varied sources from which students were required to assemble information as input for discussions, reports or role simulations.[4]

These three course components may be loosely summarised as Orientation, Remedial Practice and Study Skills. The latter component offered the students a change from linguistic to academic grouping, from linguistically-graded to topic-centred materials, and from a focus on controlled practice to a focus on information processing. Moreover, the design of the Study Skills component was moving, so far as resources allowed, towards resource-based learning. However, for several reasons it was decided that there was ample room for a fourth course component, entirely resource-based. We wanted to offer students a chance to select their preferred learning pursuits, freedom to engage in one activity at length or to change activities at will, and opportunities to re-group or to work alone. And we wanted to find a place on the course programme to utilise certain self-access resources that were less appropriate for standard classroom use. In deference to past students' pleas for more free time, and to coincide with London's late shopping day, Thursday afternoons were foreshortened, and the lengthened morning allocated to Activity Options, modelled on the *Session Libre*.

Implementation

It will already be clear that to transpose a component of a long, extensive course in France to a short, intensive course in Britain required some modifications. What follows is a summary of the form Activity Options have taken as a regular ELTI course component since 1975.

1 Frequency and duration

Activity Options were initially timetabled for the first three Thursdays of a

six-week course, but by student request they were continued in weeks 4 and 5 (the final Thursday being set aside for a course project). The Thursday timetable was scheduled for 9am to 1pm, but it was found that student enthusiasm, despite generous coffee breaks, tended to lag by 12.30. Thus 3½ to 4 hours was found to be the optimum time for an extended, weekly Activity Options session. The overall proportion of course time spent on Activity Options was roughly 20% (against Orientation 20%, Remedial Practice 30% and Study Skills 30%) and the formula has been repeated with success on subsequent courses.

2 Rules

Attendance on most ELTI courses is obligatory and therefore, following the *Session Libre* model, attendance cards are issued. These are signed in and out of activity rooms by Tutors. At ELTI the cards also serve as a record of students' work: students or tutors note down on the card which activities were chosen in a particular room. Another borrowed rule has proved essential: students may change options at will, provided there is space in the activity room.

3 Requirements

In view of the fact that much work is required of the students in the other course components, and that Activity Options are intended to provide a refreshing change from less volitional course activities, no project work is demanded of the students.

4 Role of tutors

Tutors are responsible for setting up their activity rooms before each session; in general this involves assembling resources, shifting furniture, displaying resources and in some cases preparing guidance exercises for current replacements of ephemeral resources. During the session the tutor is available for consultation. He also signs attendance cards.

5 Options

Students on ELTI courses are already living in an English-speaking environment. Activity Options do not, therefore, have the primary goal of increasing exposure to realia, but rather of offering opportunities to select from a range of useful learning activities. Moreover, the range of resources already in use in other course components has to be taken into account to avoid duplication. Amendments have therefore been made to the original six *Session Libre* options.

PRESS is included as a valuable opportunity for students to encounter a range of British publications and to read at length with a consultant tutor at hand.

GAMES are important for the opportunities they give for free oral communication. Most of the games are home-made, for two or more players, but some published games are also included.

LISTENING is offered in the language laboratory. Students on ELTI courses spend, on average, a third of the remedial practice component working on oral-aural practice tapes, and some of the study skills component listening to academic discourse. Tapes in the Listening Room offer further listening practice on topics of general interest as well as on topics that are of interest to only a few individuals.

RESEARCH is included to allow students to use published and home-made self-access materials to practise certain library and reference skills. Some reading comprehension self-access exercises are also available in the Research Room.

FILMS AND VIDEO are offered as one option. Some of the programmes shown are designed specifically for foreigners or language students. Others have been designed for wider audiences and are on topics of particular interest to some or all of the students.

Resources

Activity Options, as offered to ELTI students, require first space, and then resources. Assembling a bank of resources is a slow and continuing process. Some published resources are invaluable; other resources can be put together by enthusiastic teachers. In the brief account of ELTI's resources which follows, suggestions for further useful reference are included. Details of these references are given at the end of this article.

1. Press

Here a range of current newspapers, magazines and journals, both serious and frivolous, is needed for every session. Students are free to read at will, but suggested tasks can be written up on the blackboard for those who wish to pursue directed reading, eg 'Look at the editorials in papers A & B; compare the kind of English that is used and their political content'; 'Find a news item in a Sunday paper, then see how the story has developed in one of the daily papers'.

2 Games

These are designed to give students an opportunity to communicate and interact freely with each other. Many of the games are home-made and use magazine pictures or simple hand-drawn visuals. For example in *Describe and Draw* one student has a picture which he describes to his partner, who tries

to draw it. In *What's my Line?* (based on the TV programme of the same name) two or three students take it in turns to pick up a card which has a picture of someone who is clearly recognisable as having a particular occupation, eg a fashion-model, a policeman, a primary school teacher. His partners (or partner) have to ask questions to find out what his occupation is. Some of these games are described and illustrated in *ELT Materials: Design and Use, No. 4*[5] and in *Visual Aids for Classroom Interaction*[6]. Some other sources of ideas for games are Edward de Bono's *Think Links*[7], Paul Nation's combining arrangements[8], and Winn-Bell Olsen's *Communication-Starters*[9]. We are also grateful to Richard Allwright for his ideas on communication practice[10].

Published games sometimes used at ELTI include the word game *Scrabble* and *Jabberwocky*[11]. *Happy Families* cards, such as those produced by Oxfam[12], can be used in the traditional happy families game, where the players (three or more) have to collect 'families' of four cards by asking each other for the appropriate cards.

At ELTI a home-made orientation game *The London Underground* is used in the first two or three weekly Activity Options sessions. Each student has two or three postcards illustrating tourist sights in London; he has to plan the Underground route that will take him to these places and travel on a map of the Underground from the station indicated on his Start Card by throwing a numbered dice and moving a counter. The first student to return 'home' wins. A similar game has been produced by Hi Toys[13]. Although its rules are rather complex, they could be adapted for language students.

Because students may change options at will, a student may arrive in the Games Room at a time when there is no other student free to play with him. Short individual activities should therefore be provided, which a student can do while he waits for a partner. At ELTI a student can choose from a selection of crossword puzzles (colour-coded according to language level), and folders of language jokes and word games cut out from *BBC Modern English*[14].

3 Listening

Laboratory booths are equipped with a range of tapes, with worksheets as appropriate and answer sheets and/or transcripts available from a central table. Listening materials are selected from ELTI's tape Listening Library: graded dictations (including musical dictations[15]); selected off-air broadcasts, including the day's news; CIEL listening materials[16]; published ELT listening materials (of which the episodic story *The Man who Escaped* from *Kernel Lessons Intermediate*[17] proves extremely popular).

4 Research

One published kit is used here: the *SRA Researchlab* which consists of self-access information and question cards, and answer sheets[18]. Other materials

include the ELTI Reference Skills module, which similarly consists of self-access workcards to practise using indexes, tables of content, bibliographies, dictionaries, public information sources (eg London telephone directories, newspaper cinema guides, bus and train timetables), and consulting professional journals and pamphlets. Some of these materials are described and exemplified in *ELT Materials: Design and Use, No. 1*[19] and in *English for Specific Purposes*[20].

5 Films and Video

A timetable is displayed giving details of when each programme is going to be shown and some indication of its content. The programmes are shown as a series, following one after the other. The series is usually repeated once during the morning. Programmes shown include the film *Two to Hampstead*[21], off-air recordings of Further Education TV programmes, and a filmed version of a song from *Mister Monday*[22] made by the British Council Media Department.

Activity Options on film

In summer 1977 students at ELTI were filmed during an Activity Options morning. Details on how to obtain this film, *Activity Days in Language Learning*, are given on page 99. While giving the viewer an impression of an Activity Options morning and how it is organised, the film shows students using many of the resources described above. The Handbook for Teacher-Trainers which accompanies the film gives some suggestions on how Activity Options can be used in other situations, for example in a single classroom, and what alternative or additional resources could be used, for example graded supplementary readers, handwriting practice exercises, tape-slide programmes.

Comments

Activity Options prove popular, feasible to mount and flexible to place in an overall course design. They are exhausting to organise, but rewarding in terms of experimentation with self-access materials construction and observation of student exploitation. They prove particularly appropriate for mixed-level groups: advanced students who seek opportunities to read in depth with spend hours in the Press Room, with occasional breaks for relaxation in the Games Room; faltering students will listen intently to linguistically graded material on tape, or exhaustively master all the communication games. Here, it is no doubt an advantage that ELTI's groups are multilingual: communication must take place in English and difficulties lead naturally to peer-teaching. It is, however, important to add as a final caution that ELTI students, however shaky their English, are never real beginners. While Activity Options are no doubt feasible in courses for beginners, they would, presumably, require more careful vetting of materials.

References

1 *The 'Session Libre'* was first given in the form of a paper to the annual general meeting of BAAL in Nottingham 1973, and subsequently published in *Audio-Visual Language Journal*, Vol. 13 No. 1, 1975.

2 For further details of ELTI's approach to the Orientation week and its denouement see *The Treasure Hunt* by Marion Geddes (mimeo).

3 *ELT Materials: Design and Use, No. 2: Oral Practice in the Language Laboratory* (1978) gives annotated examples from ELTI's tape library. Available from Printing and Publishing Department, The British Council, 65 Davies Street, London W1. The British Council ELTI film *Using Tape Recorders in the Language Classroom* was filmed during the 1975 pre-sessional language course. It shows ways in which material from ELTI's tape library is used.

4 Details of this approach to the exploitation of topic-centred resources are given in *Using simulation in teaching English for specific purposes*, by Gill Sturtridge in *ELT Documents* No. 77/1, ETIC, British Council. This article is reprinted in *English for Specific Purposes* edited by Susan Holden, Modern English Publications, 33 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1 (1977).

5 See *ELT Materials: Design and Use, No. 4: Communication Games (1978)*, available from Printing and Publishing Department, The British Council, 65 Davies Street, London W1.

6 See *Four communication games* by Marion Geddes and Janet McAlpin in *Visual Aids for Classroom Interaction*, edited by Susan Holden, Modern English Publications, 33 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1 (1978).

7 See *Think Links* by Edward de Bono, published by Blandford, Direct Education Services (1975).

8 See *The Combining Arrangement* by I S P Nation, *Modern Language Journal* Vol. 61, No. 3, 1977.

9 See *Communication-Starters and Other Activities for the ESL Classroom* by Judy E Winn-Bell Olsen, published by The Alemany Press, PO Box 5265, San Francisco, California (1977).

10 See *Language learning through communication practice* by Richard Allwright in *ELT Documents*, No. 76/3, ETIC, British Council.

11 *Jabberwocky* is a sentence-building game by Alan Wakeman, Longman (1974).

12 *Happy Families* card packs can be bought in Britain from Oxfam shops.

13 *The London Game* produced by Hi Toys, is available from children's toy shops in Britain.

14 *BBC Modern English* is published monthly by Modern English Publications, 33 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1.

15 See *Musical Dictation* by J Y K Kerr, *Modern English Teacher*, Vol. 4, No. 2.

16 Details about *The CIEL Listening Library*, a collection of listening comprehension tapes with transcripts, are available from Mahidol University, Central Institute of English Language, Bangkok, Thailand.

17 *Kernel Lessons Intermediate*, by R O'Neill, R Kingsbury and T Yeadon, is published by Longman (1971). *Episodes: The Man who Escaped* is available on a separate tape.

18 Details about the *SRA Researchlab* are available from Science Research Associates Ltd, Reading Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, England.

19 See *ELT Materials: Design and Use, No. 1: Reference Skills* (1978) available from Printing and Publishing Department, The British Council, 65 Davies Street, London W1.

20 See *Reference Skills* by Marion Geddes in *English for Specific Purposes* edited by Susan Holden, Modern English Publications, 33 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1 (1977).

21 *Two to Hampstead* is an ELT film about the advantures of 2 children on a day's outing to Hampstead. It is produced by Mary Glasgow Publications (1971).

22 *Mister Monday and Other Songs* is a collection of ELT songs available on record or tape, published by Longman (1972).

VOCABULARY EXERCISES WITHIN AN INDIVIDUALISED STUDY PROGRAMME

A P Cowie

Introduction

In this article I should like to consider some of the problems – and opportunities – which arise when devising vocabulary exercises as part of a programme of individualised study. The exercises which I have in mind focus on the teaching of lexical items in terms of their co-occurrences with other items (their collocations). This approach to vocabulary teaching presents difficulties of its own – independently, that is, of its integration within an individualised programme. I shall begin by dealing briefly with these relations of co-occurrence between lexical items, and the learning problems that they create, afterwards turning to consider how lexical patterns, and the principles underlying them, can be accommodated to the constraints of individualised learning. Finally I shall attempt to show how the latter can be achieved in practice by referring to a number of exercises designed specifically for the advanced learner.

Collocation: the learner's problems

Since Corder's article on the teaching of meaning of 1968 – which was in part an attempt to explore the implications for vocabulary teaching of Lyon's work in structural semantics – a number of writers have acknowledged the crucial relevance of intralinguistic relations of sense and collocation to developing a wholly satisfactory approach to the teaching of lexis. In addition to more general discussions such as those of Wilkins (1972) and Richards (1976), there have been a number of attempts to exploit specific aspects of lexical patterning in the preparation of teaching materials. Nilsen (1976), for example, has proposed exercise material based on lexical sets relating to such fields as personal clothing – this approach is essentially paradigmatic in its concern with how a word compares and contrasts with other members of a set, thus: *jumper, pullover, sweater, jersey, cardigan.* Brown (1974) is concerned with the syntagmatic, and has made a number of practical suggestions for teaching such 'useful' collocations (ie those which regularly occur in the usage of native speakers) as *intense feelings* and *intense heat*. Certain of her proposals are extremely stimulating, and have prompted the following attempted break-down of important aspects of collocation, as well as a number of ideas for actual exercises.

Three kinds of variable seem relevant to the learner wishing to achieve a native-like control of collocations.

1 The first variable has to do with **acceptability**, whether, that is, a given collocation is regarded by native speakers as forming part of the language. With regard to acceptability, a three-fold distinction must be drawn between:

a those collocations which have achieved acceptance by many speakers (but which may not all be explainable in terms of general principles of co-occurrence – see 2). Examples of such collocations are *electric convulsion*[1] and *electric reaction* (as well, of course, as *electric cooker* and *electric shaver*);

b those collocations which are potentially acceptable by virtue of conforming to principles of co-occurrence, but which for some reason have not yet achieved 'institutional' status (Leech, 1974). An example, quoted by Brown, is *electric behaviour;*

c and thirdly, those which are unacceptable in the sense that the incompatibility of the words of which they are composed (eg *electric blush*) make them meaningless, and unlikely to occur.

2 Within the category of acceptable (those which have gained institutional status), a distinction should be drawn between those collocations which can be explained in terms of more general principles of co-occurrence and those which are entirely idiosyncratic. Thus, among the adjective collocates of the idiom *keep a – eye on somebody, close, sharp, careful, watchful* conform to a general rule that the appropriate adjective expresses vigilance. However, the choice of *weather* (as in *keep a weather eye on somebody*) can be explained by no such principle.

3 Thirdly, a distinction can be drawn, again within the wider category of acceptable collocations, between those which are commonly or 'habitually' in use (ie preferred over others which may be equally apt) and those which are not. This cuts across the distinction already drawn between collocations formed (or not formed) according to 'regular' principles. The third distinction is important, since an awareness of which in a range of acceptable collocations is the most commonly chosen is characteristic of native usage (Wilkins, 1972). A familiar example of preferred choice is that of *act* in the collocation *put on an act* (cf. *put on a facade, show, accent, manner).*

Such a categorization can inform one's judgement of what is more or less crucial to the foreign student. Thus, within the category of acceptable to unacceptable, it is clear that the **fully** acceptable must be learnt (according to general principles of co-occurrence, if relevant), though it is less certain whether the learner should be allowed (or encouraged) to produce **potentially**

[1] ie one which **suggests** that it has been caused by an electric shock.

acceptable collocations. In her materials, Brown provides for the production of both. It is probably fair to say, however, that her exercises suffer from a failure to separate collocations which are merely potential (eg *refresh the vegetables*) from those which are fully acceptable but relatively little used. The distinction is important within an individualised programme and is taken up again below.

Before we turn from collocational patterning, however, it will be as well to mention two other factors which need to be taken account of in materials (whether individualised or not) which are designed to teach it. The first is that collocations (like idioms) are found in a wide range of syntactic constructions, thus: verb + object noun, subject noun + verb, adjective + noun (Wilkins, 1972, and cf. Cowie and Mackin, 1975). It is therefore desirable that the collocational variables described above should be learnt in relation to several grammatical patterns. But as a methodological principle, it is important to keep the latter constant while lexical relations are being examined and established by the learner. There is otherwise the risk that he may respond to matters of grammatical sub-classification (eg to a finite verb combining with a to- infinitive or the -ing form) and not attend to the collocability of words as lexical items.

The second point is that when a word has two or more senses, the differences in meaning correspond to differences in collocability. As we have seen, when *electric* means 'as if caused by an electric shock' it collocates with *reaction, convulsion, shiver;* when on the other hand the sense is 'worked by electricity' it combines with *cooker, shaver, iron.* Such differences are a warning to the materials writer to proceed with caution. In the first place, an exercise should not be constructed in such a way that a word like *electric* (or *legal*, say) can be combined in an undiscriminating way with items associated with various of its meanings. That is to say, the learner should not be led to draw up such lists as *legal limit, legal weight, legal word, legal term,* in which the distinction between the two senses[1] of the adjective is obscured. More positively, the learner should be made aware of the mutual dependence of each meaning and each set of collocates; an exercise aimed at encouraging such awareness is included here (at D).

We can now turn to consider some general requirements of individualised study, and attempt to match them with the particular demands of vocabulary learning at an advanced level.

Some requirements of individualised study

In the situation, characteristic of individualised study, where students may be

[1] respectively, 'that which satisfies legal requirements' and 'as used by lawyers'.

working on different materials – possibly by different methods and at varying speeds (Altman, 1972) – it is plain that special burdens are placed on the teacher. Features of materials design which keep his intervention within tolerable limits are thus at a premium. Except in those (unusual) cases where trained help is readily available for more than one student at a time, there is much to be said for making guidance fully explicit in the materials themselves. For the same reasons, the language of instructions should be non-technical and readily intelligible. In the context of units on collocations, this may mean avoiding that term altogether or using more familiar equivalents ('combination', 'words which go together', etc), and this is the procedure followed here.

The need to reduce pressure on the teacher in conditions of individualised learning also means that the acceptability of the language which a programme is designed to elicit must be carefully considered. Such collocations as *jaundiced perspective*, for instance, though quite meaningful, are not fully acceptable. The question, then, is whether we devise exercises to prompt the construction of such borderline cases. For the advanced student, some scope must be given to explore the creative possibilities which lie on the fringe of accepted usage. Thus, some of the teaching units provided here (Bii, Cii) contain exercises likely to elicit collocations which many native speakers might hesitate to accept. That being so, it will also be necessary to create opportunities for group discussion and teacher comment – probably a price worth paying if the true nature of acceptability is to be grasped. Whether a feeling for those fully acceptable collocations which are **preferred** by native speakers can also be developed in a short intensive programme is somewhat doubtful. (Consider which of the adjectives in *take a dim, poor, bleak, sombre, pessimistic view of something* is most habitually selected.) Only extensive reading can give an impression of relative frequencies. But something can be done by providing in the exercises acceptable collocations which are also **commonly** chosen.

A third requirement (often stated in the literature of individualisation) is that learning tasks should be broken down into carefully graded steps or stages. The point is clearly that firm progress is only possible on a basis of adequate previous knowledge (teaching the collocations of *electric*, in the senses used earlier, may require a prior understanding of those senses). But there is a further point. If a number of small units is to be designed, and ordered vertically such that success with each requires prior completion of the one just below, we can also design horizontal units which duplicate the learning task at any one level but which vary the syntactic content. For example, each of several units at one level can be concerned with selecting collocates on the basis of a shared feature of meaning, but the first unit will deal with verb + object collocations, the second subject + verb, and so on. Such an overall framework provides the element of flexibility required in a programme designed to meet individual needs. It can allow faster learners to consolidate,

by tackling material which is syntactically new. But the framework can also cater for the slower learner by allowing him to repeat a given task (in a 'vertical' unit) on material which is lexically new.

A fourth requirement is that, as far as possible, the student should be encouraged to develop a principled, problem-solving approach to learning vocabulary in context. Such an approach is implied by earlier references to discovering principles of co-occurrence and determining actual collocations from those. It is in terms of such procedures that I interpret the injunction, commonly made by writers on individualised instruction, to teach the student how to learn (Altman, 1972, Disick, 1975). Not all collocations are determined by general rules. Idiosyncratic collocations cannot be taught by problem-solving exercises; they must be taught as isolated cases. But a dictionary can help by giving prominence to commonly used collocates, whether idiosyncratic or not.

This brings me to my final point. The use of reference works is commonly associated with self-study, and it would clearly be an advantage for the student to have a collocational dictionary available when attempting the kinds of exercise described here, as it would serve both as an authoritative key and as a source of examples beyond those provided in the materials. No fully collocational dictionary exists of the present-day vocabulary as a whole, but a dictionary of idioms is being compiled in which collocations form an integral part of the total description, and the first volume has appeared (Cowie and Mackin, 1975). It is in the light of work on collocations for that volume that ideas have emerged for several of the exercises presented here, and explicit reference is made to dictionary entries in certain units (eg A).

The exercises

The exercises provided below represent part of a longer 'vertical' sequence of graded units concerned exclusively with phrasal verb + noun collocations. Units developed horizontally at each point could, as suggested above, be concerned with collocations filling a variety of other grammatical patterns (eg adjective + noun). Explanatory comment is provided as necessary.

Exercise A

[As a first exercise, the learner is given practice in forming and writing out acceptable and commonly used collocations. Reference is made to ODCIE[1]. The aim is partly to give experience of collocations which have shared features of meaning. Dictionary entries whose collocations are semantically diverse are not chosen.]

[1]ie *Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English*, Vol. I.

i By consulting ODCIE, find out what words combine as **direct objects** with the following 'phrasal verbs'. In ODCIE, words used as objects are listed after a capital O in dark print near the beginning of the entry. So in the entry for *run up* (= 'hoist, raise') you will find:

run up . . . O: flag, banner, standard.

Now look up the words listed in the entries for these expressions, and write them below in the spaces provided:

pull in . . . fetch to the police station . . .
seal off . . . close the entrance to sth . . .
puff out . . . cause to go out, extinguish . . .
spoon out . . . serve using a spoon . . .

[Now a related matching exercise, in which new items are placed in the sets above on the basis of shared features of meaning.]

ii Each of the following words has something in common with one of the lists of words you have just written. Add each new word to the list to which you think it belongs:

gate, beans, thief, match, hooligan, alley, rice

Exercise B

[A problem-solving exercise which aims to make the learner aware of general principles governing (i) acceptable choices (ii) potential choices.]

i Look at some of the nouns which can combine with **flag down** (= stop by waving with a flag or the hand):

flag down . . . a car, a bus, a taxi

What have the nouns in common? All are *powered vehicles, controlled* by a driver, travelling on *roads*, equipped to carry *passengers*. Now say which of the following could equally well combine with *flag down*:

coach, hitch-hiker, tram, swimmer

Say why you accept some words and reject others.

ii Try to explain why the following nouns, which are rather unusual choices for **flag down**, might still be used:

lorry, steam-roller, water-bus,
horse and carriage, elephant

Discuss your explanations with another student if you wish.

Exercise C

[In this exercise, the student must combine nouns from a jumbled list acceptably with verb- particle expressions whose meanings are assumed to be known. The possibility of miscollocation has been made minimal: only acceptable collocations should be produced.]

i For each of the following 'phrasal verbs' choose the two or three nouns from the list that you think would combine most sensibly with it. Write the combinations down, eg *toughen up the athlete.*

1 cross out 2 set up 3 black out
4 toughen up 5 rule out

Nouns: [semantically ordered here, but jumbled for the student]
mistake, word, drawing
stall, flagpost, tripod
window, headlight
athlete, swimmer, soldier
possibility, chance, likelihood

[Now the student abstracts shared features of collocates and suggests more items of his own.]

ii What do the nouns which combined with **cross out** have in common? Something written or drawn on paper, or on a blackboard? That being so, suggest words of your own which could also fit.

Now say what the shared features are of words combining with **toughen up**. Make further suggestions of your own. You can discuss these with another student if you wish.

Exercise D

[Here the student learns the contrasting collocations associated with three senses of a verb + particle. The student is given the **features** which the collocations share, and then chooses the appropriate items from a jumbled list.]

i The phrasal verb **pick up** has several possible meanings. Three are given here:

pick up (a) . . . collect as wages, earn . . . . . .
pick up (b) . . . rescue from the sea . . . . . .
pick up (c) . . . acquire, buy (usually as a bargain) . . . . . .

The words used as direct objects for **pick up** (a) refer to particular sums of money earned; for **pick up** (b) they refer to people rescued after a shipwreck, plane crash, etc; for **pick up** (c) they indicate things bought as bargains. Now choose suitable direct objects for (a), (b), and (c) from the following list, and write them out in the spaces provided above:

good salary, old medal, survivor, silver vase, £100 a week, airman, antique.

ii Now add a few words of your own to each list. You may consult a dictionary if you wish.

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TOWARDS INDIVIDUALISATION: organising learning in an institutionalised setting*

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Introduction

The practical background for this paper is a pre-sessional course in English for academic purposes, or study skills, mounted in 1976 at the Colchester English Study Centre. The students were British Council-sponsored Study Fellows. The Study Centre itself is a language school that caters for students with clearly definable needs, and they are, in the main, taught in groups. As a language school, and a commercial enterprise, The Study Centre necessarily has an administrative and economic framework within which the organisation and teaching of most students take place. The theme of this paper is therefore the extent to which the particular needs of individual students can be attended to within such a framework. We are concerned with modes of organisation, teaching and learning to strike an optimal balance in this context. Consequently, our remarks are likely to be of most interest and to be most applicable to other institutions where such administrative and economic considerations have to be taken into account. By the same token, they will be at the other end of the spectrum from papers in this collection that deal with total learner autonomy, and the sorts of materials developed for situations where such autonomy is feasible or necessary.

The Students

The Study Fellows for whom the study skills courses at Colchester are offered come from many different countries, and in 1976 numbered 72 in all. They come through the agency of the British Council, which sponsors them for a course of study at a tertiary-level institution in this country. The fields of study vary widely. A breakdown of the intakes at the Study Centre in the years 1973 to 1976, by country and fields of study, roughly grouped together, is given on pages 3–4. However, even these groupings conceal considerable differences at individual level, in terms of field of interest and type of course to be followed. A good example is the medical grouping. This has included, on the one hand, specialists here for advanced academic studies in their particular field and, on the other, doctors going on to a British hospital on attachment, to gain clinical experience working with doctors here on a day-to-day basis.

*This paper is based to some extent on the paper given at the SELMOUS Seminar, in April, 1977 at University of Manchester.

Country		Admin. Studies	Development Studies	Economics	Elect. Engin.	General Engin.	Sciences	Medical	TEFL	Town Planning	Misc.
ARGENTINA	8	1	2			2	2				1
AFGHANISTAN	6	1		2		1		1	1		
ALGERIA	3	1			1				1		
BAHRAIN	3	1	2								
BOLIVIA	7							7			
BURUNDI	2								1	1	
BRAZIL	40	2	1	4	5	13	4		5	6	
BURMA	3					1		1			1
CAMBODIA	3					1	1			1	
CHILE	25	1	3	1		2	2	11		2	2
COLOMBIA	8	1			1	1	1		2	1	1
CONGO	4								4		
COSTA RICA	5						1		3		
CYPRUS	1	1									
CAMEROON	1			1							
DOMINICA	2							2			
EGYPT	5	2		1				1		1	
ETHIOPIA	4	1	1	2							
ECUADOR	1							1			
FRANCE	1									1	
GERMANY	1									1	
GREECE	1	1									
HONDURAS	1							1			
HAITI	1	1									
INDONESIA	22	5	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	1	
IRAQ	4	1	1		1	1					

Country		Admin. Studies	Development Studies	Economics	Elect. Engin.	General Engin.	Sciences	Medical	TEFL	Town Planning	Misc.
IRAN	11	2	1		2	2	1	1		1	
JAPAN	7				2		2	2		1	
JORDAN	3							1		1	1
KOREA	6		2	1		3					
LEBANON	2								2		
MALAYA	2	2									
MEXICO	32	6	2	4	1	4	6	3		4	2
NEPAL	19		4			1	1	11	1	1	
PERU	12		2	3	2	1		3		1	
PANAMA	5	1	1					2		1	
POLAND	6				1		1	4			
SAUDI ARABIA	1										1
SALVADOR	2							2			
SPAIN	1	1									
SRI LANKA	1						1				
SUDAN	7		1		1	2		2		1	
THAILAND	29	5	4	3		1	5	8	1		2
TOGOLAND	1							1			
TURKEY	4				2	1					1
URUGUAY	1							1			
VENEZUELA	3	2			1						
YEMEN	7			2		2		2			1
YUGOSLAVIA	2							2			
VIETNAM	1								1		
UAE	1	1									
ZAIRE	1								1		
	329										

In their own country, applicants with suitable qualifications in their special field are given a standard test, or interviewed, to assess their level of ability in English. If a level is considered too low, the application is refused. If it is sufficiently high, the applicant is able to go direct to his place of study (where he may or may not have access to additional tuition in English). Or, thirdly, an applicant will be accepted on condition that he attends a suitable language course in Britain to bring his ability up to the level needed to undertake studies at his prospective tertiary institution. And it is this third category of student, attending the 'pre-sessional' course, that we are concerned with here.

On arrival, this intake of students is characterized by a wide variety of nationality, a variety of field of interest, a relatively high level of academic sophistication and of personal maturity, and generally high motivation. On the other hand, and in spite of the 'filter' that the initial test of ability provides, there is a surprisingly wide range of ability in the basic study skills, viz reading, listening, speaking and writing. And it is this range of ability that constitutes one of the two important aspects of their individuality that we have tried to cater for, the other being their special fields of study.

Student needs

As in any other adult language learning context, student needs are defined in relation to the uses the students are, sooner or later, going to make of the language. For these Study Fellows the uses are quite well known, in broad terms, although as we shall see they do vary considerably in detail. Broadly, they are to survive and benefit in both academic and social settings of a British tertiary institution and its local environment.

The 'social survival' aspect is catered for at Colchester, with time and special materials set aside for the purpose. Other institutions have also recognised the importance of this need, and prepared their own specific materials (1). However, we shall not examine this aspect here. Our main concern is with the academic setting, and the types of task expected of our students during their courses of study. Although these are generally and conveniently classified as reading and note-making, listening and note-making, speaking and seminar skills, and writing, there is in detail quite a lot of variety within these overall categories. We send questionnaires to each of our students' prospective institutions, and in one year in the field of development studies alone ended up with the following list of study situations and tasks: lectures, group work and discussions, reading, report writing, seminars, tutorials, independent research, project work, attachment to a local authority, presentation of papers, acting as chairman/rapporteur at discussions, essays, practical work, workshops (ie simulations, case studies, in-basket exercises, syndicate exercises), 10,000 word dissertations, field work and reports on it, examinations, and final comments on courses content and methods.

Clearly, the types of task expected, and their differences, are related both to the type of course provided (doctorate, lectures and reading, practical or project work, etc) and to the nature of the subject matter. And they make for differences in the needs of individual students.

There are other types of difference that can be identified at the individual level. For example, the students' own expectations, both of the course of language learning and of his tertiary course, will be moulded by previous experience. The student may be used to methods of teaching and relationships between teacher and student that are quite different from those current in this country. For example, certain students may be reluctant to participate at all actively in seminars, or to challenge their fellow students or tutors on academic matters. For the same, basically cultural, reasons, the organisation of information and argument for presentation to others, whether in speech or writing, may differ from student to student, and also from methods and standards of organisation expected by teachers at tertiary level in this country. And, of course, there are likely to be linguistic problems that can be attributed specifically to contrasts between English and a student's first language.

Closely and individually examined, therefore, these students are for pedagogical purposes a rather disparate collection, in spite of the apparent homogeneity by the EAP or 'study skills' label.

Organisation of teaching

1 Groupings

Ideally, one would like to be in a position to prepare materials and a programme of tuition that took into account every aspect of a student's individuality. That is, they would cater individually for the requirements of his future course of study, its content and its particular demands on the different study skills; for any problems that might arise because of his type of background; and for his particular linguistic needs.

However, the economic and administrative framework within which these courses are organised imposes certain constraints. These are described below. They mean that the ideal of total individualisation is not feasible. The Study Centre can, of course, offer total individualisation in certain circumstances, but not to students who are sent on the terms outlined below.

As already mentioned, the 1976 intake of Study Fellows numbered 72 in all, and came through the agency of the British Council on a contract basis. The contract specified a full-time course of five periods a day, four in class and one in the language laboratory, for up to twelve weeks. Costings are based on

an average student group size of about ten. The course took place in summer, and relied on seasonal as much as full-time teachers. These seasonal teachers were experienced and competent, but materials preparation was not part of their terms of employment. For this reason, and because they arrived on staff very shortly before the course started, a basic course structure and sets of teaching materials were made ready in advance.

Given these constraints, there appear two straightforward answers to the central question of how to group these students for their course. The first would be to administer a standard test, or take the British Council assessments of them, and use the results to group by all-round level of ability. One would then have groups that were homogeneous in terms of ability, though mixed on every other criterion. The second answer would be to group according to field of study, ie separate groups of medical students, economists, engineers, etc. This might be considered a solution more in keeping with the ESP principle, but would necessarily produce groups of mixed ability. In a previous year we had tried the second solution. However, it was found that the motivation provided by the relevance of subject matter was outweighed by the differentials in terms of language ability and study skills between the more able and the weaker students, and, consequently, by the problems this created within each group as a whole. Another year, therefore, we tried a combination of the two, that is, with students spending part of their day in homogeneous ability groups and part in mixed ability special subject groups. They were graded and assigned to the ability groups on the results of a standard, structures-based test. In these groups they worked to develop their linguistic competence and study skills. In content, the materials used were 'specific' to the students' interests only insofar as they dealt with topics such as the life and problems of the overseas student in Britain, social problems, the developing world, and so on. Once assigned to an ability group, after the test, the student remained in that group throughout the course for work in all study skills, ie broadly, reading, listening, speaking and seminar skills, and writing. This separation of basic language and study skills work, on the one hand, and the subject-specific materials, on the other, was an improvement. However, two points were apparent. One was that work on subject-specific materials in the early days of the course was not very profitable, as it had to be carried out at a low level of language and therefore of sophistication in order to accommodate the weaker students. This was demotivating. In 1976, therefore, the separation was maintained, but a start on subject-specific work was postponed so that the weaker students would be ready to start on it at a more sophisticated level. The twelve week course overall was thus divided into three main sections:

Weeks 1–3: orientation (living in Colchester, social survival, etc)
Weeks 4–9: study skills
Weeks 10–12: subject-specific materials

COLCHESTER ENGLISH STUDY CENTRE

STUDY FELLOWS 1976

SUB-COURSE GROUPINGS

Student	Writing	Reading	Listening	Speaking/Seminar
1	1	3	1	1
2	1	4	3	1
3	1	1	1	2
4	1	1	1	2
5	1	1	3	2
6	1	3	1	1
7	1	2	2	2
8	1	3	2	1
*9	1	1	1	1
10	2	3	3	2
11	2	2	4	3
12	2	1	2	2
13	2	3	4	2
14	2	3	2	2
15	2	2	2	1
16	2	2	1	1
*17	2	2	2	2
18	2	2	1	2
19	3	4	3	3
20	3	4	2	3
21	3	1	3	3
22	3	2	4	3
23	3	4	3	3
24	3	3	3	4
25	3	1	3	4
26	4	3	4	4
27	4	3	4	4
*28	4	4	4	4
29	4	2	2	4
30	4	2	2	4
31	4	4	3	3
32	4	4	3	1
33	4	4	4	3
34	4	4	4	3

The other point to emerge concerns the organisation of the second section of the course, and is central to the rest of this paper. It was that the grouping for the study skills, arranged on the basis of the standard test, did not show that individual students might have different levels of competence in the different skills. The method of grouping used to date assumed that a low level in one skill meant a low level in another. But experience showed that this was not the case. Most students, indeed, had different levels of ability across the skills. And it was the attempt to cater for these individual differences that led to the particular format of the 1976 study skills section, and to the need for a new test.

The purpose of the test was twofold. Firstly, it was to assess the level of each student in each separate skill. For the purposes of organisation each skill would be regarded as independent. Students would be assigned to one of the graded groups for each skill, on the basis of their test results. The prediction was that most students would find themselves at different levels and therefore in different groups for different skills. Consequently, teachers of each skill could assume a reasonable homogeneity of level for any given group. This was one aspect of our attempt to cater for our students as individuals. The test was especially designed with this aim, and is described in detail elsewhere (2). Briefly, it consisted of a sub-test in each skill. Each sub-test consisted of a sequence of tasks, increasing in difficulty as the sequence progressed. Students started on the first task and completed as many subsequent tasks as they could in the time available.

Levels for the test tasks were set in relation to what was known from previous years and to existing materials. That is, they were set at points along a notional line starting at the lowest anticipated level of ability and moving up to the estimated point of readiness to undertake (English-medium) studies at tertiary level. The earliest results are given on page 51, and quite clearly bear out the original prediction, with the exception of three cases.

The second purpose of the test was to start for each student a dossier which listed problems individual to that student that might require special attention. The information in these dossiers was added to as this section of the course progressed, so that when students joined their special subject groups for the final three weeks their teachers had detailed notes on each individual and his progress to date. This was another aspect of our movement towards individualisation, or at least the more systematic recognition of individual differences.

The results of the test were used to assign each student to a group for each skill, and also to determine at what approximate point the work of each group should start. This point was in relation to the course mateirals available. These were mostly materials from previous years, edited and arranged to provide separate sub-courses in each skill, and graded along the

same lines as the test. The average test result for a given group therefore determined the 'entry' point for that group to a sub-course. The group would then progress from that initial point as far as possible, and at its own speed, towards readiness to regroup into special subject groups.

The type of course programme meant that every student had an individual timetable, detailing his group for each sub-course. To this extent, we were able to reconcile the administrative and the pedagogic, and it was the case that both teachers and students of each group were clearly aware that teaching and learning were going on at an appropriate level and pace. There were very positive reactions to this arrangement.

At first sight, it might seem that the provision of a basic core of materials for each skill sub-course would impose certain limitations. However, because teachers were assigned to teach one skill with all groups, they became highly sensitive to rates of progress and to the different needs of each group. The result was additions to the materials, as and when required, made by the teachers in response to these needs as they revealed themselves during the progress of the course. Also, by concentrating on a single skill, teachers were stimulated to develop existing techniques and evolve new ones in response to what they discovered about their students' learning patterns.

After five weeks on this section of the course, students were regrouped by field of interest, as follows:

Development Economics
General Economics
Environmental Sciences
Medical and Dental
Civil Engineering
Electrical Engineering
Teaching English as a Foreign Language

There are those who argue that this specialist teaching and learning should start right from the first day of an ESP course. Our own experience, however, has been that for the learning with subject-specific materials to be well motivated, the content needs to be at a certain level of sophistication. If students are unable to cope with the level of language associated with that sophistication, they do not benefit and, indeed, lose confidence. On the other hand, it was clear in 1976 that the five-week study skills section had provided a very good foundation for transfer of skills, acquired in a general or neutral context, to the subject-specific work. For us, this justified the overall course design.

In the specialist groups, work continued to improve study skills. However, adjustments were made to suit particular groups and the types of tertiary

course students were going on to, in the light of information acquired through the questionnaires already referred to.

For example, the civil engineering group would need the skill of presenting their work orally and have it discussed and analysed by colleagues. Therefore in their specialist group they spent a large percentage of the available time mastering the technique of presentation and discussion. On the other hand, most of the electrical engineering students were to be involved in predominantly lecture type courses and needed additional listening comprehension and note taking skills during their specialist 3 weeks.

In this way, also the attempt to cater for individual needs, in a group context, was further refined.

2 Individuals

The type of operation described so far does not warrant the label 'individualisation', and the reasons for this have been given. However, there were resources available to support students on a purely individual basis. These took the form of practice work out of class, either voluntary or at the suggestion of the teacher, where an individual need revealed itself that could not be dealt with in the group context.

Each student was expected to produce several examples of his written work to be read, corrected, and returned by the writing teacher. These were note taking, summary writing, essay writing, report writing, assignments linked to the study skills writing programme and later, to the student's specialism. This type of feedback to the student was also used as the basis for additional lessons in sentence construction, outlining, paragraphing, etc.

The students were timetabled into the listening centre to use taped cassettes as listening comprehension and note taking practice. The listening centre was also available at other times for individual students to work on their own.

The use of the SRA reading laboratories both in class and during breaks was felt by most students to be useful practice in analytical reading, reading for understanding and vocabulary practice. Possibly the most useful of all was analysis of precisely worded exam-type questions in a non-exam atmosphere.

Conclusion

1 Potential Improvements

The 1976 study skills course at Colchester should be seen as part of an ongoing evolution of course formats and materials, and each year possibilities for improvement make themselves clear. Some of these are suggested here.

One area that needs looking at is the grading of the materials available from the previous years. This material was reworked so that it aimed at the mean level of all students. Consequently, teachers for each skill were required to adapt the material upwards or downwards for the more advanced or the lower groups. In particular, catering for the lower groups involved considerable adaptation of the basic materials.

There was a need felt for weekly objective feedback to students. This would have helped them evaluate their progress and to see in which skill they neede to concentrate most at that time. However, in the context of study skills, it is not clear what form such an assessment might take.

In the speaking skill classes, the groups of 10 or 12 were too unwieldy for daily discussion or seminar practice. More profitable might have been individual or small-group work leading to a weekly session of discussion, individual presentations or student-led seminars.

A suggestion that would provide a further degree of individualisation was that some pronunciation practice should be provided with students grouped by mother tongue.

Finally, a system of 3- and 6-month follow-ups on the students, in their tertiary institutes, might show what they saw in retrospect to have been useful in the Colchester course. This in turn would contribute to decisions on courses in subsequent years.

2 Degree of success

In spite of the constraints detailed above and the clear possibilities for improvement, the overall operation appears to have been a success. During and after the study skills section of the course many students expressed surprise and satisfaction that they had found themselves in 'just the right' group for the various skills. They felt relaxed but still well motivated in a class where the others shared the same difficulties. Not one student asked to be moved to a higher or lower group for any skill. This was taken as some indication that the students were satisfied with the placement system we had instituted and with our attempt at a modified form of individualisation.

SUBJECT-ORIENTATED LANGUAGE LEARNING AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

A Research and Development Project

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Introduction

The aim of this pilot project, which is financed by the Nuffield Foundation and the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, is to prepare an experimental language course and develop an appropriate methdology for undergraduate students pursuing courses leading to a degree in any subject in the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Economics and Social Studies. The proposed language courses would be a compulsory element in the subject of 'European Studies'. For all other subjects the language courses would be optional, but an integral part of the degree examination for those students who chose the option. Although the present economic climate has caused these Faculty plans to be postponed, it was considered important to start this pilot project as soon as possible.

During consultations with the Heads of Department concerned, it became clear that the language courses should be fully subject-orientated not merely to aid the student during his studies at university by giving him an opportunity to read foreign specialist literature but, more importantly, to give him a sufficiently high competence in the use of the foreign language to enable him to participate effectively in discussions and negotiations through the medium of the foreign language after he has left university and has taken up employment, especially as Britain's new role in the EEC will demand a larger number of graduates with this knowledge and ability. It is intended that courses should also be prepared for English as a second/foreign language, so that the results of the present experiments can be used for a wider range of students.

From a linguistic point of view the courses will be directed towards enabling the student to progress: (a) within his chosen field of study, (b) from a simple conversational style to the use of language under conditions of stress and conflict. These two aspects of language learning require a very low teacher/student ratio because (a) students will have to be divided into subject groups, thereby reducing the number of students in any one group, and (b) language learning in simulated conditions of stress within any field of study requires giving the student a great deal of individual attention. Consequently these courses would have to include a large number of self-instructional items. They would not be open to complete beginners.

a Initial learning and consolidation of basic material

The student would be introduced to the linguistic register relating to his field of study. In addition to specially prepared printed materials, students would be presented with graded audio-visual courses which could be used for **group** and/or **individual** learning.

Although the content of these courses would be subject-orientated and might well deal with complex data and complicated meaning chains, the student's main attention at this stage would be focused on language. The units would, therefore, not include difficult problem-solving items relating to the subject. The main aim would be to give the student an opportunity to gain as efficiently as possible an automatic **linguistic** mastery of terms and phrases used in his subject within sentence patterns in appropriate situations, and the ability to permutate terms, phrases and clauses to create new sentences with different meanings to satisfy new conditions.

b Preparatory stage for use of language under conditions of stress

Without appropriate materials, this stage would be most time-consuming in terms of teaching time though not necessarily in terms of learning time. With self-instructional materials available the student would now be faced with graded problem-solving items to which he must make as quickly as possible oral (or written) responses. Whilst the stimulus-response procedure in 2a was mainly **linear**, consisting of imitation, interpretation, extension, substitution and question and answer exercises, 2b procedures would consist of **branching** stimulus-response programmes (binary or multiple choice). This would force the student to switch his attention from the foreign language to the subject or else he would not be able to make a response. If he were unable to make a response he would have to return to the relevant part of audio-visual course 2a for further initial learning or consolidation. It could, of course, be that he has not grasped properly the **subject matter** presented in language course 2b. In this case he would have to turn to his subject department for clarification. It should be made absolutely clear, however, that the language courses are not intended to teach any part of the discipline presented in the foreign language, nor act as a screening mechanism for identifying students who have not fully grasped specific subject items, though it is possible that students might gain from the additional contacts made with their subject during language learning.

Whilst in courses 2a the stimuli would consist mainly of single sentences (within situations), together with visual aids (film-strip) for meaning retention and consolidation as well as for cueing responses which are recorded, courses 2b stimuli would consist of longer oral presentations together with response

regulators for branching programme responses. Courses 2b would be of two types:

a audio-lingual + response regulators (printed materials) // recorded response;

and

b video presentation + integrated (visual display) response regulators // recorded responses.

Each response selected by the student would cue the appropriate subsequent stimulus which in turn would make available a series of possible responses, etc (see flow diagram, p.).

Both 2a and 2b courses would thus allow the student to study the various uses of language at his own pace in his own time within his own particular discipline without the constant presence of the teacher. As courses 2b place the student into a position of confrontation where he has to argue his case within clearly defined limits, the saving in teaching time is great.

c The use of language under simulated conditions of stress

Members of staff would now be able to devote more teaching time to this final and most important language work. This is a continuous exercise similar to the 'War Games' exercises held by politics departments, except that all proceedings are now conducted through the medium of the foreign language. Students present and defend their cases either singly against a lecturer or another student or in opposing groups. All necessary reference materials, as well as unexpected items (radio or TV statements and announcements, newspaper items, memoranda, etc) injected during the procedure to simulate conditions of surprise, attack, counter-attack, evasion, bluff, withdrawal etc, are drawn up in the foreign language, and students must communicate in speech and writing at all times in the foreign language. The role of the referee would in most instances be taken by one of the lecturers.

Methodological implications

Although the methodology is presented here in separate categories for easier reading, our aim is to allow the student to progress for any unit or group of units through the various methodological stages, so that he can learn to proceed as early as possible from 'medium-orientated communication' to 'message-orientated communication'. In our other experiments and projects, eg the Schools Council project in Bilingual Education, it has become absolutely clear that the learner must learn as soon as possible to switch to the latter form of communication if there is to be any guarantee of success. Whilst message-orientated communication, where the learner's mind is not focussed

solely on language but on a desire to communicate to satisfy non-linguistic needs with the aid of the foreign language, is at the beginning accomplished and held for very short periods, experience has shown that over the weeks and months these periods are being continually extended, so that eventually a great deal of time is devoted to true foreign-language communication where language has become the vehicle and not an end in itself. It is unfortunate that in so many language-learning procedures, even in so-called modern and progressive audio-visual techniques, the medium, ie the language, is still the message. The only message communicated in such conditions is about the language-learning process itself, in so far as the student makes a response to show his teacher that he can in fact make a response, and where the teacher throws out stimuli mainly to ensure that the student can make a linguistic response.

Present-day conditions in the world require a far higher degree of communicative competence than that with which we are satisfied at the moment. Whilst methodologists have striven hard in the past to wean language teachers away from merely teaching 'about' the language to teaching learners how to use the language, a new stage has now been reached in language-teaching methodology. 'Using' the language is no longer sufficient because the artificial setting of classroom procedures as presently defined will tend to make the learner's and the teacher's mind remain focussed on the language rather than on the transmission of real messages to satisfy non-linguistic needs, eg satisfying curiosity, scoring a point, clarifying the ambiguous, etc. Stress should now be laid on distinguishing between 'using' a language and 'making use of' a language, so that no doubts can remain in teachers' minds that their role is to produce students for whom language has become a tool rather than an end-product. It is a pity that in the past we have unwittingly coined methodological terms, such as 'the target language', which imply that the language is the target of the language-learning process. The target of this process should not be the language, but the communication of real messages which should also include paralinguistic and non-verbal forms of communicative behaviour. It is for this reason that we must be most careful to ensure that the self-instructional items do not interfere with our aim of helping the student to learn how to switch his attention from the foreign language to the subject matter which he wishes to communicate. This type of communication cannot be achieved, however, if the student is not given an opportunity to master in his learning progression particular language items to a high degree of proficiency within any topic or concept area. Only then is he able to relegate language to a secondary position for the topic dealt with at the time.

The present development of the pilot project

We received sufficient funds to employ one Research Officer. It proved impossible to find a subject specialist who was a fluent linguist and also

possessed specialist knowledge of applied linguistics. We were fortunate, however, to find an extremely able linguist. The university department most interested in the proposed work was the Department of International Politics which, for various reasons, wanted us to use German for the experiment.

The first task of the Research Officer was to identify what was being taught in the Department of International Politics and to draw up a schedule listing all the various items. eg international relations, NATO, disarmament, the role of naval forces, so as to ensure that fundamental and/or important concept clusters with a high frequency of use were not omitted from the materials. At the same time an analysis of negotiations and conflict situations was made, so that the appropriate factors of argument could also be incorporated.

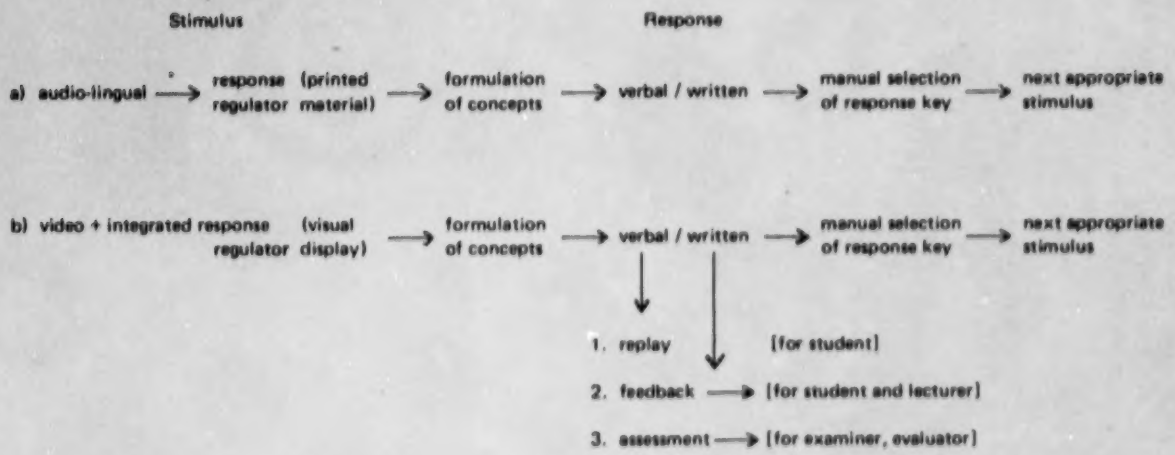
We are now in our first year, and so far we have established the various concept areas of the subject 'International Politics' and the various factors reflecting human behaviour in this field. Some eighty or so trial units (dialogues and narratives) with visual aids have been developed, and at present we are testing the visual aids to ascertain the degree of visual inference the students can achieve with these aids both for meaning acquisition and retention, and as instruments for cueing responses with or without spoken or printed stimuli. In addition, the efficiency of printed or spoken texts without visual aids is being tested.

We are in constant touch with the Department of International Politics to ensure that our materials are factually correct, especially in dialogues for stage 2a where the action is often transferred to situations relating to the environments of students rather than those of politicians. At the moment we are also beginning to collect data (content and procedures) for the final stage of fully message-orientated communication in negotiations, bargaining and other areas of stress and conflict during 'War Games' sessions.

Furthermore the 'injection' materials will have to be prepared in the various media, so as to simulate unexpected conditions of surprise which might alter the development of the negotiations as originally planned by the participating students. Drawing up a dual- or multi-party strategy and its related materials for 'War Games' session is extremely difficult and complicated, even for university lecturers operating in their own language in the Department of International Politics. It will not be any easier for us, especially as we have to work within certain linguistic restraints, which will restrict the freedom of the course planner.

Once the various language-learning variables, eg visual inference, have been analysed and tested in relation to the materials, the scripts will have to be arranged in graded sequences suitable for stages 2a), 2b) and 2c). The total experimental course will then have to be tested in feasibility studies and appropriate modifications will once more have to be made.

Flow diagram of learning processes in relation to the materials and equipment



Some sectors of British industry have heard of this work, and we have already been invited to one meeting with Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) who would like us to develop a German course for the subject of 'Engineering' so that their engineers can more efficiently conduct negotiations or deal with German engineers and erectors on the shop floor through the medium of the foreign language. As with everything else, funds will be needed to finance such a scheme and we are awaiting the outcome of our own negotiations with interest, though not under 'conditions of stress and conflict'.

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ENGLISH FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS

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Introduction

From an analysis of the basic needs of engineering students in spoken and written English a series of learning packages has been devised to provide learning situations for students from overseas who seek to improve their use of English in order to further their specialist course of studies at the Polytechnic.

At its present stage of development, the scheme provides a tutor with a bank of teaching material, ie the learning packages, and the student with a number of short self-assessment exercises. Errors made in these exercises indicate a starting point for remedial work.

As flexibility is an essential requirement of the scheme, the assessment exercise can also be given to a group of students. In this case the collective results provide the tutor not only with a means of checking on his own assessment of the major needs of the group, but also enables him to decide when to set up small group teaching, and where to select appropriate study material from the learning packages.

The self assessment exercises

A CLOZE procedure is basic to these exercises. (The first exercise and checking copy are shown in Appendix A). An analysis of the content of the first three exercises for readability and linguistic complexity has defined the order of presentation. (This analysis is shown in Appendix B.) Trials indicate that most students complete the first exercise in approximately 12 minutes and the second in about 15 minutes.

To build into the scheme a degree of formative evaluation and also to give the student evidence of progress (or lack of it), the first and second exercises are worked consecutively. The first exercise is self-checked and the second exercise is checked by the Supervisor. The errors for each exercise are totalled and then entered onto record cards, which define the next assignment according to the student's particular needs.

Errors are classified into eight major grammatical categories. According to any errors made in the first four categories a student is directed to a specific learning package that provides relevant remedial learning material and further

practice in that category. (The record card and categories are given in Appendix C.) When errors made fall into the remaining four categories or an exercise is error free, a student is directed to the first of a series of learning packages that are shown in diagram form in Appendix D.)

The learning packages are divided into two levels: level one deals with remedial grammatical material and is closely linked with the self-assessment exercises, level two provides learning materials for reading, writing, listening and speaking and gives practice in setting-out, understanding and discussing information.

The learning packages

Magazine, journal and newspaper articles, selected and adapted according to the expected needs, interests and ability of typical overseas undergraduates, provide the main source of the 'core' material of the learning package.

The learning activities, developed from the 'core' material of each package, are summarized on a file card, (an example of a package summary card at level one and level two is given in Appendix E). For the majority of the packages, these activities are available in both written and spoken form. A suggested procedure for working through them is given on an instruction sheet (see Appendix F). By this means a tutor, who having decided on the type of control he wishes to maintain within the student group can either make his own selection for his group presentation, or follow the suggested procedure given in the package. Individuals or small groups with the same needs, within the tutor's larger group can then work at their own pace.

Because part of the Polytechnic HND and degree courses in Engineering include working on an industrial project with a particular firm, all students must understand verbal instructions and be able to discuss problem situations.

To this end, all spoken 'core' material is presented by standard voice, (Received Pronunciation, or Standard English), but in a selected number of cases the questions and model answers of an activity are recorded in a regional accent, and the student is then offered the choice of either writing down his answers or recording them on a cassette.

Trials of this spoken mode indicate that more development work is required. However, in order to operate the present scheme it is assumed that a language counsellor will make sample assessments of the answers that students record onto a cassette, and then, where appropriate, make recommendations for any further treatment.

Packages are identified by a number and a title; the lower numbers provide practice in dictation, comprehension, and the formulation of questions and

answers and the higher numbers in precis and report writing. Thus a suggested ordering of the packages is implied.

Although all packages at level two provide model answers to questions, it was evident during the trial period that tutors and students need a more formal indication of the degree of achievement reached, and so a package specifically designed as an end of term test was included in the sequence.

The end of term test

This package contains three exercises that need to be completed within a given time limit. Two short related passages on a botanical theme form the 'core' material.

In the first exercise, comprehension of the first passage is assessed by checking 50 true-false questions; in the second exercise ability to find specific information is tested by stating the whereabouts of 10 statements in both passages, and the third exercise tests competency in writing a short descriptive account of an activity shown in a photograph.

Further development

Core material for learning packages that will constitute a phase two of the scheme has already been selected. This material which will provide work in structuring information on a larger scale will also be at a higher level. It will encourage students to apply the teaching points of previously worked assignments to their own original work.

NAME ..... APPENDIX A

COURSE .....

The Girl Who Was Blind and Deaf

WRITE in the numbered box in the text the word which best fits the sentence. Then transfer your answer to the boxes in the right hand margin.

It was in the spring of 1890 that I learned to speak.

In fact I had always had a strong impulse

1.	utter audible sounds. I used to	1.
make noises, keeping 2.	hand on	2.
my throat while the other hand felt 3.		3.
movements of my lips. I was pleased with anything		
4.	made a noise and liked to feel	4.
the cat 5.	and the dog bark. I also	5.
liked to keep 6.	hand on a singers	6.
throat, or on a piano 7.	it was	7.
being played. Before I lost my sight 8.		8.
hearing I was fast learning to talk but after		
9.	illness which made me deaf it	9.
was found that 10.	had now	10.
ceased to speak because I could no 11.		11.
hear. I used to sit in my mother's lap		
12.	day long and keep my hands	12.

on her face [13.] it amused me to 13. [ ]

feel the movement of her [14.] ; and 14. [ ]

I moved my lips too, even though I [15.] 15. [ ]

forgotten what talking was. My friends say that I

[16.] and cried naturally, and for a 16. [ ]

long time I uttered [17.] sounds 17. [ ]

and parts of words, not because they were

[18.] means of communication but 18. [ ]

because the need to exercise [19.] 19. [ ]

vocal organs was imperative. There was, however,

one word [20.] meaning I still 20. [ ]

remembered, **water**. I pronounced it 'wawa'.

[21.] this became less and less 21. [ ]

intelligible until the time [22.] 22. [ ]

Miss Sullivan began to teach me. I stopped saying

[23.] only after I had learned to 23. [ ]

spell the word [24.] my fingers. 24. [ ]

APPENDIX A

The Girl Who Was Blind and Deaf

Checking Copy

CATEGORIES

A	DETERMINERS
B	VERBS
C	NOUNS
D	PRONOUNS
E	ADVERBS PARTICLES
F	PREPOSITIONS
G	CO-ORDINATORS CONJUNCTIONS
H	ADJECTIVES

to	B	
a . . . one	A	2
the	A	3
which . . . that	G	4
mew . . . miaow . . . purr	B	5
my	A	6
while . . . as . . . if . . . when	G	7
and	G	8
my . . . the	A	9
I	D	10
longer	E	11
all	H	12
for . . . as . . . and . . . because	G	13
mouth . . . lips	C	14
had	B	15
laughed	B	16
audible . . . unusual . . . only . . . the . . . some . . . many	A/H	17
some . . . the . . . any . . . a	A	18
the . . . my	A	19
whose	G	20
however . . . gradually . . . but	G	21
that . . . when	G	22
wawa . . . it	D	23
using (B) . . . with . . . on	F/B	24

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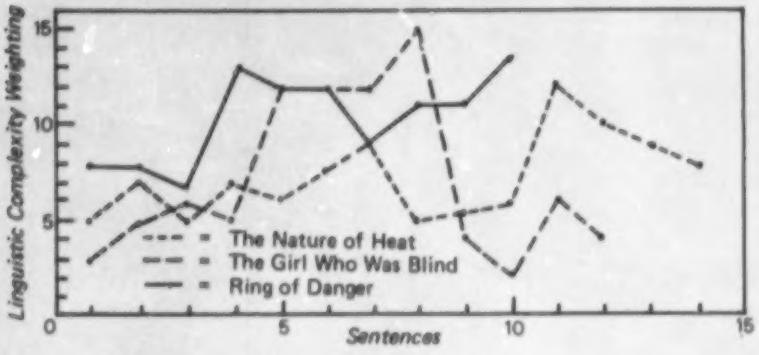
Comparison Three Cloze Passages for Reading Age and Linguistic Complexity Scores



Reading Age (Fry)

I took the first 100 words of each passage. Fry works on length of sentence and number of two or more syllable words in the selected passage.

READING AGE (Fry)	MEAN LINGUISTIC COMPLEXITY (Botell)
13.0 The Nature of Heat	7.14
10.5 The Girl Who Was Blind	6.5
15.6 Ring of Danger	(per 10.5 sentence)

Linguistic Complexity (Botell)

I found it difficult to apply this formula to this material – I had previously only used it with young children's reading material. The graph shows the weighting for each sentence so you can see whether the sentences are getting more or less difficult throughout the total passage. Mean score (per sentence) seems to correlate with reading age or readability level.

All three passages seem to get more difficult in the middle, though the two information passages peak towards the end. Order of difficulty on both measures would seem to be

			FRY	L.C.
1. The Girl Who Was Blind	– 12 sentences	Easiest	10.5	6.5
2. The Nature of Heat	– 14 sentences		13.0	7.14
3. Ring of Danger	– 10 sentences	Hardest	15.6	10.5

Dr E J Goodacre
Middlesex Polytechnic March 1977

NAME. _____ COURSE. _____

RECORD CARD for English assignments September 1978

1st EXERCISE - Girl who was blind and deaf :

Enter TOTAL number of errors in each category

CATEGORY		error	ASSIGNMENT number	TITLE of learning package
determiners	A		*CALT 0100*	*Description of a House & Garden*
verbs	B		*" 0200*	*Instruction on how to cook*
nouns	C		*" 0300*	*Conservation of Damaged Documents*
pronouns	D		*" 0400*	*Crime & Punishment*
adverbs/particles	E			
prepositions ..	F			
co-ordinators/ conjunctions ..	G		*CALT 2020*	*The Post Office Railway*
adjectives	H			
		NONE		

Use of English

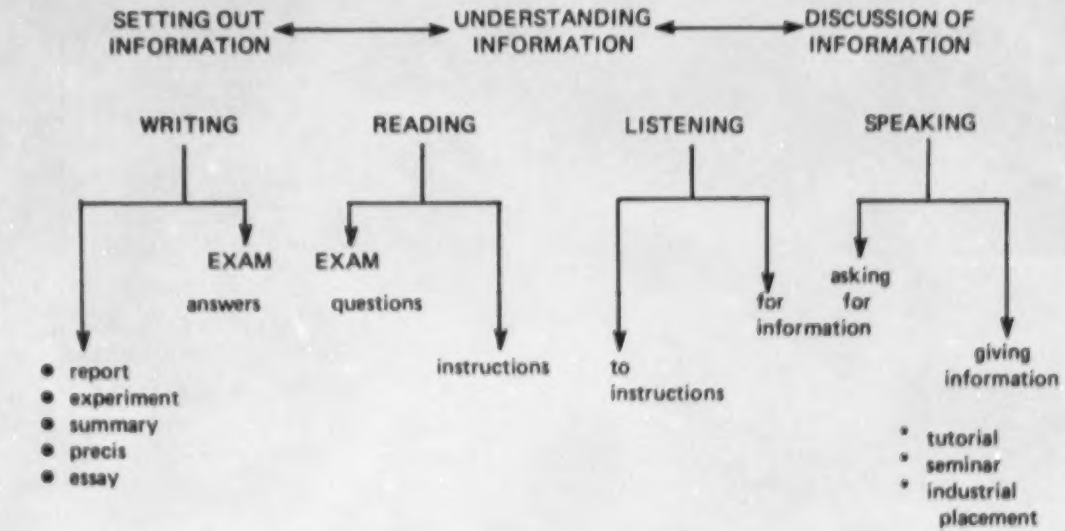


Diagram to show students' basic needs in the use of English.

CALT 0400

Crime and Punishment

to practice use of pronouns. (Cat.D)
to complete Crossword puzzle.

CALT	Instructions
1.	READ the following passage.
	*LIST suitable pronouns that replace underlined NOUNS.
2.	CHECK list with correct answer.
	*WRITE a 3rd version choosing between nouns and pronoun.
3.	CHECK answer.
	*Discuss any 'errors' with tutor.
4.	DO Crossword puzzle.
5.	CHECK answer.

CALT 2020

The Post Office Railway

to practise reading/writing (OR) listening/speaking
to test PREPOSITIONS - (Cat.F)

CALT	Instructions
1.	READ description - use glossary
2.	LISTEN to description - given twice - 2 voices
	*RECORD answers to spoken questions on own cassette
	→ *to language counsellor - check pronunciation*
3.	Glossary
4/5	WRITE answers to written questions
6/7	CHECK answers with - suggested correct answers
	*DISCUSS errors with tutor
8/9	CHOOSE the correct PREPOSITION (Cat.F)
10.	CHECK answers with marking copy
	*DISCUSS errors with Tutor
11.	LISTEN and then write DICTATION
12.	CHECK your answer - LEARN the correct spelling.

The Post Office Railway

The exercises in this booklet will help you to practise . . . . . .

reading and writing

OR

listening and speaking

Choose the way you prefer.

READ . . . CALT 2021

making your own notes

USE the GLOSSARY

CALT 2023

when you are unsure of a word or phrase.

WRITE (in your note book) answers to QUESTIONS . . .

CALT 2024 and 2025

refer to your notes only.

CHECK your written answers with the suggested correct answers CALT 2026 and 2027

DISCUSS any 'errors' with your tutor.

LISTEN TO . . . CALT 2022

(Tape or cassette)

A description of an unusual railway is given TWICE. During the second description you must take NOTES: Halfway through, and at the end of this, QUESTIONS will be asked. Make use of these notes to . . .

RECORD your answers on your own cassette tape

NOTE – if a cassette is not available write answers to questions.

LISTEN to suggested correct answers . . .

RECORD any amended answers.

HAND IN your cassette to your language counsellor.

---

then . . .

CHOOSE the correct PREPOSITION . . . CALT 2028 and 2029

CHECK your answer . . . CALT 2030 and DISCUSS any error with your tutor.

LISTEN to and then WRITE the dictation

CHECK your answer

LEARN the correct spelling of any mis-spelt words.

ASPECTS OF AUTONOMOUS LEARNING

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Introduction

The word 'autonomy' is an umbrella term which covers several different experimental fields presently being explored at the CRAPEL, and which, at the same time, is the common denominator in all those endeavours, for it is a philosophy of learning – though one with very practical implications – and the ultimate goal of any learning situation. Despite certain superficial similarities, autonomous learning has little in common with individualised learning, since individualised learning programmes are usually highly directive. Self-directed learning programmes, on the other hand can be regarded as sharing many of the characteristics of autonomous learning strategies, the difference being one of degree. Indeed, it can be argued that the degree of directivity which the learner exercises over his own learning process is a degree of autonomy. However an introductory article is not the place for a demarcation dispute and readers interested in these matters are referred to the papers of the recent Cambridge Seminar on Autonomous and Self-directed Learning (ed. Harding, forthcoming), in particular the contributions of Chaix and Dickinson.

A note on the background

Autonomy, as it is being developed at the CRAPEL, is a logical outcome of both the indignant articles on the present state of teaching by a small minority of educators, philosophers and psychologists, and an obvious growing inability of evening classes to meet adult learners' needs:

> It is a response to those, like Illich, who inveigh against the present educational machine, claiming that 'school prepares for the alienating institutionalisation of life by teaching the need to be taught', and urge us to 'recognise those institutions which support personal growth rather than addiction and allow people to take control of their own learning'. (Illich, 1970).
>
> It is an effort to apply the 'helping relationship' defined in Rogerian Therapy ("congruence, unconditional and regard and empathy") to the language learning situation, where the helper's role is to create an atmosphere that is conducive to significant, self-directed learning;
>
> and it is the extension of the ideas already being voiced in Nancy in the late '60's by Bertrand Schwartz (Ecole des Mines) and Yves Chalon

(founder of the CRAPEL) that, in a world in constant movement, teaching can no longer be satisfied with simply passing on packaged knowledge but must begin to provide people with the means of acquiring this knowledge for themselves. This implies a concentration on methodology rather than on content.

It is, finally, an alternate solution to the classroom situation, which, because of people's increasing mobility, their family and professional involvements, and growing needs for ESP, must necessarily be recognised as inadequate. We can no longer claim to squeeze the acquisition of a satisfying level of proficiency in English into the short time and restricted space of an evening class.

For all these reasons, the CRAPEL insists on differentiating between teaching and learning, and on experimenting with strategies that do not teach the need to be taught, but rather give learners the opportunity to reclaim responsibility for and control of their own education. In doing so, it is also investigating the possibilities for an institution to function as a resource centre, an adjunct to a learning process freed from time and place restrictions and institutional management.

Our experience in organising evening classes in English for adults brought home to us the need for an alternative to the traditional type of language course. The drastically-dwindling attendances, typical of this type of adult education, forced us to reconsider our approach and to ask ourselves whether it would not be possible to develop a pedagogical strategy which recognised the practical and social limitations of our adult professional learners. These disadvantages may be briefly summarised as follows:

1 The course takes place regularly at the same place – but this may be geographically inconvenient to the learner.

2 The course takes place regularly at the same time – but the learner does not live a life of clockwork precision; he sometimes has extra professional duties, or falls ill, or has family or social commitments. For some learners (doctors, commercial travellers, factory works on shifts, servicemen) this is so extreme that it prevents their even registering for the course, so that the institution fails them completely. For many others, a class missed cannot be compensated for, and the resulting gap may eventually lead to their abandoning the course completely, since they are convinced that they can only learn in the classroom. On the other hand, the learner may be free at times when there is no course – time which is consequently wasted.

Again, since courses are established for a set number of hours per year, they may result in a learner with very limited aims in spending considerably more time than necessary in the classroom. As a typical 100 hour

evening course now costs approximately £170, this may also result in the individual's spending far more money than necessary.

3 Since evening classes are based on the group, it is very difficult for specialised needs to be taken into account. If a teacher finds that he just happens to have a group of 10 bio-chemists, needing to read specialised articles, at the same level, he can (if he is willing) do something about it. But this is rarely the case: the evening course structure therefore forces a generalised approach to learning which ignores the learner's special needs and motivations.

4 There is also the point that a number of adults dislike working in a group and for yet others, the evening class offers a repetition of their schoolday attempts to learn languages – which were a failure.

5 Institutions, whether private or public, which exist to provide instruction are unlikely to undermine themselves. They encourage the learner to believe that they are essential to the learning process.

Whereas all teachers and institutions are fully aware that teaching can take place without learning, they fail to draw the logical conclusion that these are two separate activities, and that learning can take place without teaching. In Illich's words, "they pervert the natural inclination to grow and learn into the demand for instruction". Whilst it is not realistic to expect institutions of this kind to commit suicide, there are perfectly practical reasons for trying to free the learner from dependence on the institution. One of the most important is that as long as the learner remains dependent he will continue to attend classes, whether he needs them or not. This leads to the ridiculous state of affairs where a learner registers year after year after year for courses in the same subject with the same institution. Such a learner is often described, with unconscious irony, by the teachers as "one of my best students".

Eternal students of this type never reach either pedagogical or linguistic independence: a failure by any standards. But the instruction they demand is becoming increasingly expensive. For some institutions (e.g. private language schools), this is all to the good. Others, though, have been increasingly feeling the burden, and it is of interest to note that several of the biggest firms in Europe – who cannot be accused of airy-fairy pedagogical notions, nor of an ideological desire to activate the latent independence of their staff – are now experimenting with various types of self-instructional material and strategies.

Interesting, too, is the fact that whilst some education officers are willing to consider an autonomous strategy for their executives, they refuse it automatically for the lower-grade workers. This type of reaction is based on social stereotypes and not on pedagogical experience: in the various projects with which the CRAPEL has been involved, and where the learners have ranged

from welders to bottle-makers and forestry workers to professors of medicine, there has been no observable correlation between social class and success or failure in autonomy. Nor, surprisingly, has there been any correlation between level of attainment and degree of autonomy: it is quite possible for a complete beginner to be completely autonomous, and for an advanced student to be dependent on institutional support.

Attempts to link autonomy and personality, to try to draw up some kind of psychological profile which would enable us to predict whether an individual would be successful or not working autonomously, have not been particularly rewarding. Given the complexity and variety of human personality, this is not really surprising. Motivation, as in all learning, is of the essence, so too are the levels of aspiration the learners set for themselves, and their approach to self-evaluation (Henner-Stanchina 1976b). The attitude and personality of the helper are also crucial (Rogers 1973); one of the biggest problems at present is finding suitable helpers, people who are able, amongst other things, to resist the temptation to teach.

The role of the teacher

The angry rejection by many people of any suggestion of autonomy shows clearly that we are not dealing with just another new methodology of language teaching. Autonomy clearly implies a challenge to social roles, starting with that of the teacher-expert. So deeply-ingrained is this role in our culture that any change in it is difficult to contemplate. Yet, even today, most people who learn a second language do so without a teacher: the majority of the world's population is bilingual and formal classroom teaching makes only an infinitesmal contribution to those statistics. Moreover, the standards reached by learners outside the classroom tend to be far higher than those achieved in formal education.

Naturally, many teachers reject the idea of autonomy because they see in it a threat to their livelihood. But it is also a challenge to the role of expert: traditionally, the teacher has been the source of all wisdom, the fountain-head of all knowledge, the model (Pirsig 1974). Indeed, for many people, this is one thing which makes teaching worthwhile. Yet a number of factors are combining against this image of the teacher.

1 The first and most important of these is that by taking on the full pedagogic responsibility, the teacher removes from the learner his own responsibility for his learning. To take just one example, and by no means an extreme one: many adults are convinced that all they have to do to learn a language is to attend a course. Simple bodily presence is all that is required from them: they will sit in the classroom, the teacher will do his job and, somehow, learning will take place. But it is common experience that in the

vast majority of cases learning does not take place, for the simple reason that the teacher cannot learn it for you.

2 Another challenge to the role of the teacher-expert comes from the increasing and increasingly specialised needs of learners. It is by no means uncommon for us to have a group including a biochemist, a lawyer, a commercial traveller, a bursar, etc., etc. Now the teacher cannot be an expert in all these domains and so the most he can hope to do is show the learners various techniques for improving their performance, in other words, to help the learner learn. His role is no longer that of provider of information, but of helper: he is one of the range of facilities available to the learner.

3 It can be shown that the presence of a teacher distorts the discourse which is the learner's target.* The teacher comes between the learner and the L_2, he interferes with the normal interactive processes: and the simplest answer to teacher-interference is teacher disappearance! With the move towards a communicative based teaching methodology, this point becomes crucial. The minimal pedagogic unit in communicative teaching is the exchange: for reasons of authenticity and efficiency this means breaking down the teacher-class dyad into sub-groups for pairs-practice, group-teaching and so on and this in turn implies a considerable shift in the role of the teacher.

4 Traditionally, the teacher has been the model for the class, but this justification has been negated by the introduction and common availability of the tape-recorder, which can not only provide a range of models far wider than any individual, but also act as a stimulus in many language-learning activities. Indeed, all the activities which can be carried out in a classroom by a teacher with a taperecorder can also be carried out at home by a learner with a tape-recorder. Provided he is willing to take the first step, to accept the responsibility, the teaching role, the learner can free himself from the teacher and the institution. To a large extent, this means simply taking over management tasks, such as deciding when and where to work, what materials to study, what techniques to employ, how long to work for, etc.

Of course this does not happen overnight. The whole of the learner's experience of learning goes against the idea of autonomy; this is why the helper is needed, to see the learner through the phase of transition or semi-autonomy. In the classroom, too, the teacher can help prepare his students for autonomy both psychologically and methodologically ([2])

* For a detailed exemplification and discussion of this point, see RILEY (1977)

([2]) Techniques are discussed and described in Riley (1976), Henner-Stanchina (1976 a,b)

It is not possible to go into every type of activity in detail: below is a brief list of some of the techniques used:

i *Games* in which the teacher does not participate and which he does not direct. e.g. One learner secretly puts a number of geometric shapes on a table and covers them; his "opponent" tries to reproduce an identical arrangement by asking questions.

ii *Group discussions* without the teacher, which may or may not be recorded (see Meany 1976)

iii *Blot-outs:* using the cloze technique, a student can produce his own drills, tests and exercises and can concentrate on those aspects of the language which he finds most difficult. It is helpful if two copies can be made of a newspaper article: on one, all the prepositions, say, are blotted out. The learner tries to find them, using the second copy to check his performance.

iv *Simulations:* e.g. a learner who knows he will have to take a visitor sightseeing might simply practice with another learner first.

v *Home-made drills:* a vast number of drills can be constructed mechanically e.g. a learner might turn every sentence in a newspaper article into the negative or interrogative.

vi *Description exercises:* the learner takes a cartoon or a picture from a magazine and tries to describe it. If he is working with another learner, there might be questions, discussion, etc.

vii *Peer-matching and task-matching:* learners are introduced to people at the same level, or having the same problems as themselves.

viii *Introduction to native speakers:* groups of non-teacher native speakers are invited into the classroom. Learners are shown that they do not have to wait until they reach some abstract level of perfection before they can communicate in English and that they can benefit from such encounters.

Sound library

Access to materials is a key point in any autonomous learning strategy. For those learners wishing to improve their oral skills this can present some difficulty. Suitable recordings are sometimes difficult to acquire, the learner often does not know how to choose the most appropriate recording for his purposes, nor what techniques to employ. By helping him define his needs, by demonstrating study techniques and by making available a wide range of materials, the helper creates the conditions which are necessary if learning is to take place. This is why the sound library has an extremely important role to play in any autonomous (or, more precisely, semi-autonomous) learning strategy.

In 1973, a research team from the CRAPEL designed and developed a sound and video-library for the Faculty of Letters of the University of Nancy([3]). The learner chooses one of the 1,500 documents (authentic recordings, courses, video-recordings) and a cassette copy is given to him. If he only needs to listen, he goes to the Listening Comprehension Section – a series of cassette-players fitted with headsets. If he is working on some aspect of oral expression, he goes to one of the audio-active comparative booths. If he wants to improve his viewing comprehension, he goes to the video section of the library; this is a series of video-cassette recorders and T.V. monitors, fitted with headsets. Learners work individually or with friends, but formal class groups are forbidden. At present, some 1,400 – 1,600 requests for documents are made per month, and observation of learners and the strategies they adopt is proving a rich source of information.

Everything possible has been done to make the library and its contents available to the learner. The cataloguing system, for example, relies on lists of "key words", the meanings of which are immediately clear, rather than on a technical code. Ideally, every learner would find exactly the type of recording which corresponded to his needs: a doctor off to chair a meeting on cardiology would find authentic recordings of medical seminars, for example. In fact, he will probably have to compromise in his choice, and, to start with at least, this is where the helper's advice comes in.

An experimental autonomous learning scheme

The autonomous learning scheme was set up three years ago to cater to the needs of adults who were either unable to attend any sort of formal evening class, or were simply unenthused at the prospect of going back to the classroom.

([3]) A detailed description of the lay-out and functioning of the library is to be found in Riley and Zoppis, 1976.

The first experimental group involved 26 learners. Within two years, taking account of the inevitable turnover in this type of strategy, 56 people (18 women, 38 men) had at one time (and for whatever length of time) been part of the strategy. It is worth noting, although this perhaps does not attest to any real, widespread change in attitude towards self-directed learning, that interviews carried out over the two-year period reveal a progressive decrease in the proportion of people who choose autonomy for lack of any other solution, in favour of those who consciously prefer the opportunity for autonomous learning. Of the 30 learners in the second year, 10 had already had experience with some kind of class or group set-up elsewhere, be it an intensive language session or extensive evening courses. These 10 people, along with numerous others who had not had previous group experience,

rejected the classroom solution either on the grounds that it was (or would be) inadequate in meeting their very specific needs, that working in a group simply did not appeal to them, or that they felt entirely capable of learning English on their own, and all the more effectively, providing the CRAPEL could give them the material means to do so.

As for learners who were still dependent on the classroom and the teacher, the fact that they could not be gradually weaned away from this dependence was compensated for by their high achievement motivation, by the nature of the material provided, and by the helper-learner relationship that developed during the work sessions requested by the learner. The frequency of these sessions is determined by the learners, as is the helper's role.

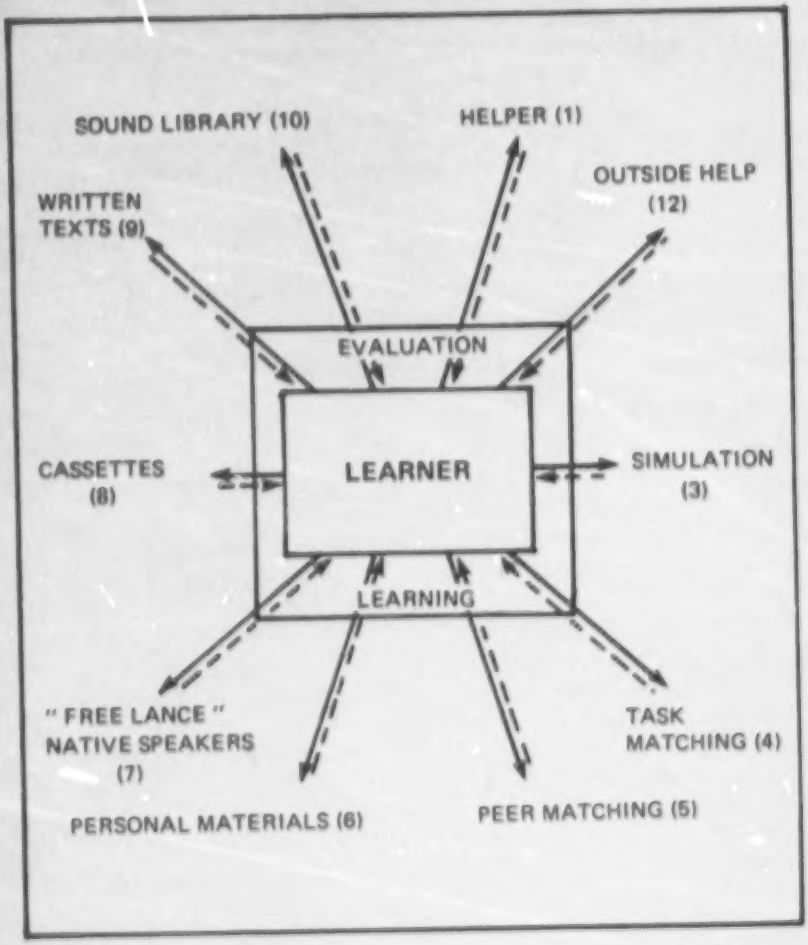
The diagram shown below represents the entire autonomy scheme as it is operating now. All its potential components are centred around the learners who, as the arrows indicate, move outward towards a variety of available resources, choosing the ones most appropriate to the attainment of their language goals. The helper is simply one of the optional resources in this set-up, just like all the other services provided by the CRAPEL. The fact that there is no centre for dispensing knowledge indicated on the diagram is, obviously, in no way an oversight, since the notice of teacher competence has been revised and the final responsibility for learning left to the learners themselves.

The three case histories briefly recounted below are provided to illustrate exactly how learners with either general or very specific language needs can combine these 10 elements in various ways to form total learning experiences, and to elucidate the respective roles of the learner, the helper and the institution involved.

1 Mr. D.

Mr. D., a brewery engineer, was overwhelmed by the heap of technical texts he had to read regularly in English. He recognized the inadequacy of his reading skills when what he thought he understood was in contradiction with what his technical knowledge told him to expect. His goal, then, was to develop accuracy, as well as speed in reading these documents, and to do so as quickly as possible.

Mr. D. began by choosing elements 1 - 6 - 9 (see diagram) as the basis of his learning experience; that is, the freedom to consult the helper when necessary, the use of his own technical documents and the use of the CRAPEL's beginner's course in written comprehension. Had time permitted, Mr. D. would have gone through an initial stage of deciphering more general English, using the beginner's course, then passing through a second stage of applying



LEGEND :

LEARNER

represents choice of learning experiences in function of needs, goals; etc.

indicates feedback on learner's performance in a given situation.

the morpho-syntactic rules he had learned to his own personal materials. However, since he was pressed for time, he decided to skip the course element 9 and get right down to his texts.

The first session with the helper was devoted to examining several pages of one of these texts, so that Mr. D. could point out those elements he would usually stumble on. This exercise revealed his most urgent problems as being:

a) the complex noun phrase

b) the reduction of relative clauses and passives

c) procedures of substitution and ellipsis, and discourse reference

d) semantic value of verbal forms.

Successive sessions, therefore dealt with these points in particular.

a) **the complex noun phrase:**

- "the membrane covered oxygen electrode"+
- "a negative going linear voltage ramp"
- "a sufficiently stable and repeatable reference potential"
- "a gas permeable, ion and protein permeable, membrane"
- "a special stainless steel reinforced Teflon-silicone rubber composite".

Mr. D. used these examples, and others, to practise identifying the head, (moving towards the far right) and pre-modification components (post-modification being far less common in the texts).

b) **reduced relatives and passives:**

- conducive residues *left* in connectors after autoclaving or remaining after liquid has splashed in the connector . . ."
- "typical current-potential curves or polarograms *obtained* with the solution *stirred* at a constant rate and *equilibrated* first with nitrogen, then room air, and finally pure oxygen are *presented* in fig. 2."
- "A negative going linear voltage ramp *is applied* to the platinum and the current generated *measured.*"
- Oxygen at high concentration levels is *required* during the early stages of the brewing cycle".

+ all examples are taken from Krebs, S.M. "Dissolved Oxygen Measurements in Brewery Systems", in MBAA Technical Quarterly, vol 12 No 3, 1975. (Words and phrases in italics are those which gave particular difficulty.)

Once Mr. D. had been shown the structures of relative clauses and passive forms, he was able to restore the elements necessary for comprehension.

c) **Procedure of substitution and ellipsis, and anaphoric reference:**

- "... by utilizing an anode material which has a potential close to *that* of the optimum operating voltage ..."
- "The diffusion later acts as a greater impedance to the transport of oxygen to the cathode than *does* the solution flowing past the layer."
- "the 'blood gas' electrode has the smallest cathode, the 'alarm' electrode has the *largest*"
- "flow sensitivity is observed when Zr becomes significant, as it *can* in dissolved oxygen measurements ..."
- *"This* has created a need ...."
- *"This* establishes a concentration gradient between the level of oxygen in the sample and *that* at the cathode ...."

The most effective way of re-establishing those various "pro" forms once they had been identified, was to go back over the text, to do a more detailed reading of it, in order to determine the antecedents. Mr. D. did just this, meeting with the helper afterwards to verify his hypotheses.

d) **Semantic value of verb forms:**

1. "If the condition for planar diffusion of oxygen to the platinum cathode *were to be met*, the current, in the complete absence of stirring and convection, *would be found* to decrease to zero with the reciprocal square-root of time."
2. *"Should Ep (actual) 'slide'* over the edge of the current plateau, the output current sensitivity will decrease and vary with the electrode current"
3. *"As long as 'd' remains* constant the observed current *will be* proportional to the oxygen level."
4. "If K *were constant* for all combinations of solvent, solute and temperature, the relationship between the oxygen partial pressure and concentration *would be simple"*.
5. "An electrode which *is not to experience* extremes in either pressure or temperature, such as the IL Blood Gas electrode, is simple to design."

The hypothetical value of the subjunctive in 1. and of the inverted word order in 2. had to be pointed out to the learner. Similarly, the compound

conditional conjunction in 3., the inference of an unreal condition in 4., and a command in 5. had to be made explicit, for the learner was misinterpreting them. Having reviewed these structures once, he was then well equipped to recognize and understand them in other texts.

Besides the purely structural or grammatical problems examined, the concept of communicative acts was also approached briefly, focusing on such functions as:

- DEFINING: "The platinum is the cathode inasmuch as it is the electrode at which reduction (that of oxygen) takes place. The chlorided silver sheet is the anode, since the corresponding oxidation reaction

  Ag + C1 e Ag C1

  occurs at that electrode

- INSTRUCTING: "Therefore, following an abrupt change in environmental temperature, time should be allowed before the electrode either is calibrated or data acquired in order for the thermistor to arrive at the new temperature."

A third problem that was but touched upon was that of training to skim+, that is, to get a general idea of the text so as to be able to determine whether or not it is of interest, and if so, how it can be approached.

In a well constructed scientific article, signals such as:

- "This paper will attempt to: first, second, and third . . .
- "The more common techniques employed for oxygen analysis can be divided into three main categories:

  Physical, chemical and electrochemical.
  Physical methods include . . .
  Chemical methods include . . .
  Electrochemical methods are based on . . ."

- "The electrochemical methods can in principle be subdivided into two categories . . . . (1) . .
  (2) . . .
  These are discussed in the next sections . . ."

+ "Skimming" as defined by Pugh, implies:
  - obtaining for its own sake an overall impression of certain features of a text (e.g. surface information, structure, tone)
  - "obtaining advance organization of a text which has to be known but which presents difficulties."

can be of great help to the reader who has to locate his information as fast as possible.

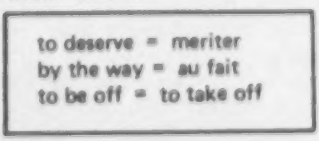
Unfortunately, the lack of time made it impossible to deal with these last two problems in any more than a superficial way.

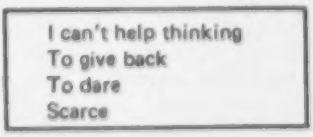
This case serves as an example of how the helper (not an expert in the art of brewery), who may or may not understand the actual content of the articles to be deciphered, can nevertheless supply the tools necessary for analysing them. From there on, the learner takes over, using these tools, along with his technical background, a dictionary and any other reference work he might have at his disposal, to plough through these documents with increasing speed and accuracy.

Mr. R.

For Mr. R. a learner with no very specific needs other than the desire to improve his aural comprehension and oral expression in English, the learning experience consisted of elements 1 - 2 - 5 - 7 - 8.

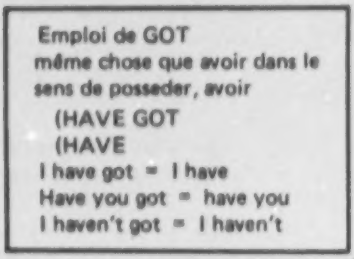
Given the Cours Intensif d'Anglais Oral, a course composed of spoken texts and structural exercises, Mr. R. insisted upon writing out translations of all the sentences, first into French, to make sure he really understood them, and then translating them back into English, to see if he still remembered the given structures. Devoting approximately 8 hours a week to his task, he naturally had little time left to use the recorded material provided him to practice aural comprehension and oral expression. When this was brought out to him, he explained that this was the only way he felt he could learn and retain anything. Discussion revealed that he judged his memory to be very poor, and what, in fact, he was unconsciously striving for, was to memorize the course book. The helper suggested trying to elaborate a system of "fiches" or index cards that could eventually serve as a reference guide to the structures and vocabulary he had studied, while relieving his memory of those elements inherent to the course material and perhaps less likely to come up in real situations. Having thought this idea over, Mr. R. did decide to abandon most of his translating (except for some vocabulary) and began making index cards instead. However, when he had produced the first few and showed them to the helper, two flaws were discovered. First, the cards were not cards, but little pieces of torn paper that could never have lasted long enough to serve as a reference document. Second, index cards such as those shown below.



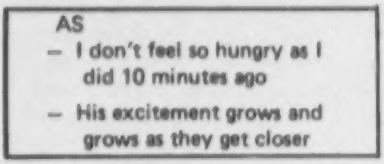


would certainly have been very difficult to exploit, would have been ineffective as a study guide mainly because various elements were all grouped together in order of appearance in the course, and there was no way of knowing where to look for anything, and no guarantee that he could ever find what he was looking for. By making this observation and showing Mr. R the following examples of index cards being elaborated by another learner in autonomy (1), the helper led him to develop a much more usable system of fiches, samples of which are also provided here (2).

1. Model extracted from another learner's set of index cards and shown to Mr. R.


Emploi de GOT
même chose que avoir dans le sens de posseder, avoir
(HAVE GOT
(HAVE
I have got = I have
Have you got = have you
I haven't got = I haven't

2. Example of Mr. R.'s second, useable version of index cards, classified in alphabetical order by structural heading on card: or by first letter of verb or vocabulary word studied, and placed in a small filing box for future reference:



This satisfied Mr. R. as a remedy for a failing memory and a substitute for translation and allowed him more time to concentrate on the oral and aural skills he was, in fact, trying to improve.

However, this attitude exhibited by Mr. R. that a language is a "savoir" that is, a combined set of grammar rules and vocabulary to be ingurgitated before that language can actually be put to use, led him to initially postpone or reject the meetings with native speakers that were offered and encouraged by the CRAPEL. He wanted, first, to store up all the structures presented in the course materials, then move into an application phase (conversations with native speakers–, and then come back to another storage and perfection phase. He could not conceive of combining those phases of storage and application, because he did not recognize language as a "savoir-faire", a communicative tool that may be used at all levels of proficiency.

This problem was handled in 3 stages. Since his readiness to test his communicative competence in an authentic situation did not come naturally because he was too self-conscious, afraid of ridiculing himself by making mistakes, and nervous about the contact with a stranger, Mr. R. preferred to meet with the helper, a native speaker of English, for conversation. The second intermediate stage which was useful in building the learner's confidence in his own performance was the "peer-match". Mr. R. was introduced to another learner who was at approximately the same proficiency level (and who, in the helper's opinion, was likely to have something in common professionally or personality-wise, with Mr. R.). Their discussion dealt with their respective jobs, general topics of current interest, and especially with aspects of autonomous learning.

Since in many cases, autonomy has become synonymous with a certain dose of solitude, this peer-matching system provides an excellent opportunity for learners to commiserate with each other one might say. Thus, they compared study habits, discussed their perceptions of their own strengths and weaknesses, while each one took advantage of the situation to measure his performance against the other's. The helper was present at this session, acting as an objective observer, and recording the conversation to enable the two learners to re-examine their own performances.

The final stage of this progression is generally, of course, the actual meeting with a native speaker. It is here that learners can test their general interactional competence – how well they understand what is said to them, as well as how sensitive they are to non-verbal signals coming from their interlocutors, and how effectively they respond.

Mr. R. went through the first two stages being so obsessed with grammatical correction, that his part of the conversation would resemble a sort of stream of voiced hypotheses on each particular sentence. Obviously this absorption led him to become totally insensitive to signals from his interlocutor indicating that he had already made himself understood, and was therefore, rather unconductive to spontaneous interaction, to say the least. At the end of the second stage, this was brought out to him by the helper. A discussion of the minimum adequate level of competence at which he was beginning, and of the differences between grammaticality and acceptability, ensured. This enabled him to work towards freeing himself from his self-imposed constraints, and to engage in more natural interactions with native speakers.

He later hired (with the aid of the CRAPEL acting as a placement agency) an English speaking assistant for his office, thereby multiplying his opportunities to speak English in authentic communication situations.

In Mr. R's case, as in countless others, the helper did not merely transmit a fixed body of linguistic knowledge to the learners, but discussed the efficacy of certain techniques in view of their priorities and objectives.

Professor A.

The first encounter with Dr. A., a professor of cardiology in Nancy, took place in March 1976. At that time, he explained that he was going to be attending an international conference on cardiology (held in Holland) in late June, where he would not only be giving a slide lecture but would also be acting as chairman for one of the round table discussions. This meant that within about three months he had to bring his competence in the aural/oral skills up to a sufficient level to ensure him accurate understanding of the conference business and enable him both to fulfill his functions as chairman and deliver his own slide presentation, as well as to participate freely and confidently in the extra-curricular activities organized around the conference.

Professor A was immediately given a selection of cassettes, ranging from intermediate CRAPEL course material to authentic recordings of radio discussions on medical subjects.

A plan was established whereby

- the helper would try to gather as many examples of conference chairing as could be extracted from materials available at the CRAPEL;
- Dr. A. using his past experience of conferences, his acquaintance with all the round-table participants, and the abstracts he had received for each of their papers, would prepare his introductory speech, contemplate his potential interventions, and begin drawing up a list of his functions as chairman, and send these to the helper as soon as possible. He would also write out the commentary for his own slide presentation, so that any necessary modifications could be made in the text.
- The dates for all future helper-learner sessions were arranged in advance, with tasks being fixed for each meeting by Prof. A., so that he would be able to fit the meetings into his heavy schedule of teaching, consulting and travelling for professional reasons.

The interval between the first and second meetings allowed the helper enough time to analyze tapes of international conferences (e.g. IIIe Colloque International sur la Biologie Prospective, which had been held in Pont-a-Mousson in October 1975, and the International APLET Conference of 1976) and to cull from them a certain number of functions common to

chairpersons. These elements were classified in light of the communicative acts that were being performed in each case, some examples being:

- making opening remarks
- giving instructions to speakers and to the floor
- introducing speakers
- handling questions
- bringing back to the point
- taking up a point
- making closing remarks

Whereas normally, copies of the actual tapes of these conferences would have been given to the learner along with transcripts, in this case, the poor quality of the recordings would have made this choice unwise, for the strain involved in simply understanding the tapes would have been inappropriate and unconducive to the learner's attainment of his goal in oral expression. Therefore, the scripts resulting from analysis of authentic conference tapes, and enriched with examples taken from the helper's personal experience of conferences, were recorded (by a male English voice) onto cassettes, where gaps had been left to allow for repetition.

In addition, a list of expressions drawn up in French by the learner and translated into English was reviewed and reworked during one of the sessions.

All subsequent work of this type was carried out in the same way; Prof. A. writing a preliminary version, the helper-learner session being devoted to exploring ways of improving it, whether through the use of already published articles in the field of cardiology (in English) as models, the use of a dictionary, of the helper, or of any other means suitable to the learner.

But a strictly linguistic examination of Prof. A's work proved insufficient (this is not, of course, a problem peculiar to autonomy), giving way to discussions on verbal interaction within a particular communication situation and in function of the relationship of the speakers involved.

These discussions were prompted by a particular comment aimed at one member of the round table whose ideas about the indications and usefulness of surgical treatment were diametrically opposed to Prof. A.'s.

His proposed intervention went as follows:

- "Thank you, thank you so much Dr. O. . . for a very interesting paper. It makes me wonder if we shouldn't do away with the

entire surgical part of this session . . . . One can hardly say that you're especially fond of emergency coronary surgery, isn't that so, Dr. O? !" . . .

This utterance, while still only in its preparatory stage, was nevertheless marked by all the prosodic, paraprosodic (voice quality, speed of delivery) and extralinguistic (gesture, facial expression) phenomena that could have made the conveyed irony catastrophic within the context of this conference. Who was Dr. O. and what was his position in the international cardiologists' community in relation to Dr. A's? What were their professional and personal relationships like? So many questions, and more, had to be asked by the helper, who tried to probe the relationship of these two "colleagues" in an attempt to determine the force of this utterance. Was this meant as playful jest, or biting sarcasm, and would the hearer's interpretation concord with the speaker's intentions? Dr. A. resolved to talk this over with his co-chairman, who, being Scottish, and knowing the context of the conference, was far better equipped than the helper to judge the potential effect of this utterance.

(As it turned out, Dr. A. did not pronounce these words, for Dr. O.'s speech demonstrated that he had, in fact, softened his stand on cardiac surgery.)

Having thus helped Prof. A. prepare for his role as chairman, the next logical step was to attempt a simulation. Needless to say, this simulation would allow him to carry out only the more general functions of a chairman (making opening and closing remarks, giving instructions to speakers, to the floor, handling questions . . .) excluding, of course, his planned interventions on the content of the speeches themselves. The helper, therefore, tried to set up a "Task-matching" session, to be simulated by a professor of chemistry and followed by a discussion among the members of his laboratory. Unfortunately the timing was wrong – Prof. C's speech was not ready early enough for this task-match to be realized. However, Prof. A. was still able to simulate, using his notes (as he expected to do during the conference) and recording himself: his acts as chairman, his comments between speakers and his own slide lecture, several times, both alone and in the presence of the helper.

Tending to his other needs, that is, being able to indulge freely in casual relationships with people at social functions during the conference, the helper introduced Dr. A. to an English student who happened to be in Nancy at the time. And over the three-month period, this student visited Prof. A. regularly for "conversation".

Conceived at different levels, Prof. A's preparation for the role he was to assume, and for the continuation of learning thanks to the techniques and the awareness of learning possibilities he had acquired, proved effective.

The autonomous learning strategy allowed him, by selecting from the learning resources put at his disposal by the CRAPEL, to organize his own, most productive learning experiences. He reports that the conference went rather well and is satisfied with his performance. He also took our suggestion and recorded the conference, so as to have his own authentic documents to work on in the future, a further step in reducing his dependence on the CRAPEL. (These recordings will also be copies, thanks to Prof. A., for the CRAPEL tape archives, and will therefore be available for future use by other learners.)

On-site courses and experiments

In this article, we have concentrated on

1. Autonomous learning by people following traditional evening classes

2. An autonomous learning scheme for people unable or unwilling to follow a regular course of any kind.

There is an important third category, but one which cannot for the moment be expanded on, owing to lack of space. This category includes a number of on-site courses in industry into which the CRAPEL has introduced an autonomous component of one kind or another. These courses usually involve English for special purposes and so far they have included

(i) English for bottle-makers
(ii) English for doctors
(iii) English for printers
(iv) English for science students
(v) English for welders

Further details of these courses are to be found in the various articles from the Melanges Pedagogiques, cited in the bibliography.

One final point: there is no question of our trying to force our learners to become autonomous – this would be a contradiction in terms: autonomy is something the individual chooses. If, after our learners have heard about autonomy and have been shown the various practical ways of going about working independently, if after this they still choose to follow a classroom course with a group and a teacher, that is their right: but at least they will have made a genuine choice, aware of the alternatives and options available and not blindly and automatically followed a tradition whose results are highly questionable.

RECAPITULATIVE CHART

LEARNER

Understands role: maintain motivation; take on responsibility for:
Defining needs, goals, priorities
selecting materials, organizing learning experiences (program developer)
determining pace, time devoted to study
diagnosing learning difficulties
developing adequate learning techniques
self-monitoring: guiding and planning the learning process

self assessment:

furnishing materials, when possible

devising descriptions of English
determining level of perfection sought in function of personality

manifesting a certain willingness to accept change (both cognitive and effective (attitudinal) changes) if confronted with attitudes or techniques that are recognized as more beneficial.

determining frequency of sessions with helper

HELPER

Understands role: not a private tutor, may assist learners at any stage of the learning process, acting as an objective observer, open to discussion, to sharing ideas, giving advice when asked, assuring methodological preparation, by helping learners develop techniques and use them as tools for analyzing their documents, evaluating their own performances, and using media and people as learning resources. Being available. Assuring technical preparation. provide learners with opportunities to receive feedback in authentic situations. furnishing materials when possible

helping to set up those descriptions in function of learner's degree of linguistic sophistication

Manifesting a sincere caring for learners, adopting an attitude and creating an atmosphere that are conducive to and supportive to autonomous learning. Assuring psychological preparation, providing an environment that will encourage attitudinal changes when these are advantageous for learners
intermediary between learners:

INSTITUTION

Flexible structure, making such experimentation possible, providing a special place for helper-learner sessions.
Making the rapid reproduction of materials possible — fast cassette copier: xerox photocopier.

furnishing materials — tape archives collection of dossiers, newspapers, magazines

Lending equipment — cassette players cassettes.
Making simulations in studio possible

Facilitating contacts with native speakers residing in Nancy — establishing a network of free-lance native speakers of English.

Dealing with material problems: paying helper, establishing registration fees, paying for a certain number of "conversation" hours, which represents a socially embarassing situation to learners.

LEARNER	HELPER	INSTITUTION
	Coordination: peer-matching, task-matching, preparation of material (cassettes, other documents, simulations). Keeping detailed notes on each learner: knowing what cassettes they have, which experiences they've chosen, which resources they've used, where they are as far as the development of learning techniques is concerned, how they've fared in authentic communication situations – thru contact with native speakers who have met them for "conversation". Awareness of research being carried out in the field of language learning – further research into the acquisition of each of the language skills. Ultimate production of learning materials for learners with less specific goals.	

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MOTIVATION, MATERIALS, MANPOWER AND METHODS: some fundamental problems in ESP

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ESP is in danger of becoming a juggernaut. Vast resources in many parts of the world are already committed to the provision of courses of instruction in English that are tailor-made for purposes which are occupational (EOP) or academic (EAP), in spite of the fact that no satisfactory solutions appear to have been found to certain fundamental problems. My purpose in this article is to consider a few of the basic questions that have arisen concerning the motivation of the learner, the provision of appropriate teaching materials, the demands made upon teaching staff and the use of appropriate teaching methods. I shall not deal only with the problems of such courses in Britain: insights from overseas experience will also be adduced.

Much has been said about the 'need for EAP': and much has been written about the identification of the learner's 'needs', yet it remains true that some ESP programmes have been mounted without regard to the fact that these 'needs' may not be felt very strongly by the learners. Roe (1975) suggests that it is not unknown for English Departments, other faculties or even Government bodies to foist ESP programmes on to groups of students without carefully considering their needs, and rightly identifies the crucial question: Does the **learner** have a special purpose in learning English?

It is interesting that, in a report by the Language Centre, University of Malaysia (1975), mention is twice made of the fact that English, in the view of the students, has to 'compete' with subject courses: the students apparently feel no great need for EAP. We are told in the same report that lecture handouts are 'often and increasingly produced in Bahasa Malaysia', a fact which must partly account for this lack of motivation. I am also reliably informed that the mother tongue is used in subject handouts **and** examinations in Tabriz, the location of one well-known EAP programme. These particular expedients do not apply to EAP in the UK, but the question remains: Should the learner himself, and not his language teacher, his subject teacher or the ESP expert, specify his language needs?

If the answer is a qualified or unqualified Yes, there is a second question to consider with regard to motivation, one which is especially important in dealing with the overseas student in Britain. Let us assume for a moment that the student does not always know what is good for him; that someone else has identified his greatest 'needs' as (say) listening skills for lectures and reading skills for dealing with the study of texts; but that what he **wants** is Social English, 'conversation'. Now, such interactive skills tend to have little or no priority in EAP; in fact Social English is normally regarded as being

outside its terms of reference. But we have surely to remember that, whether the student is right or wrong in his assessment of his own needs (or 'wants'), it is his wishes that constitute the basic motivating factors, and not those of anyone who thinks he knows better. The question therefore is: How far should the learner's 'wants', as opposed to any externally identified 'needs', be catered for?

Clearly, there are some decisions in which the student's views will be given little if any consideration; his own assessment of his competence in English is a case in point. Jordan (1977a) stresses the fact that students who are rather poor in language performance grossly over-estimate their own language ability; but this does not necessarily imply that such students are poor assessors of the type of language practice they are most in need of at any given stage. Jordan and Mackay (1973) did elicit their students' own assessment of the need for spoken English tuition. From the results of this survey and from experience Jordan (1977b) concludes that 'Social English' is needed in the early stages of the overseas students' stay: and a similar provision at Reading University has led to the publication of *Communicate: The Language of Social Interaction* by Johnson and Morrow. Such provision accords with common sense where the student is studying in an English-speaking environment.

However, similar 'wants' may be felt elsewhere too. According to the Language Centre Report (op cit), the Malaysian teachers judged that the reading skills of their students should be given priority, whilst the students themselves wanted

> 'to be able to communicate orally, both for its own sake and for its potential usefulness at work'.

It would be interesting to know whether both sets of views were taken into account.

Motivation is, of course, also affected by the quality of the materials the learner uses, by the quality of the methods employed by the teacher and by the quality of the teacher himself. With regard to materials, Phillips and Shettlesworth (1976) note that the standard provision has been

> 'novel practice exercises based on language selected for register, which aim to capitalise upon student motivation by being self evidently consonant with his needs'.

My next question challenges this assumption: Is this necessarily the best policy?, Certainly, by basing materials on texts dealing with the student's special subject we can be reasonably sure that we are at least dealing with the sort of language he needs to be able to read and write – provided that the

texts are of an appropriate academic level, of course. But such a policy creates difficulties, some of them massive.

One of the problems has already been mentioned: the motivation of the learner. After a lesson built around a text on Polymers, students of Fibre Science at UMIST pleaded, 'We don't want to hear about polymers'. (They, too, wanted 'Social English'.)

Of course, the lesson might have been boring, the teacher sluggish, the students tired (it was about six o'clock); there are so many variables to take into account. But the fact still remains that those students at that particular time with that particular teacher did not want that particular kind of lesson. It is not surprising that learners find it difficult to disregard the subject-content of a text in order to concentrate on the linguistic expression of it: and if the subject is for any reason 'unwanted', the language tends to be 'unwanted', too. I shall later consider these two aspects, with regard to the teacher rather than the learner.

There are also major logistical considerations in providing the learner with materials of the sort considered to be 'consonant with his needs'. Phillips and Shettlesworth (op cit) found from experience that the time and manpower involved in the production of ESP materials for 'one-off' purposes can become prohibitive.

Smith (1977) and his colleagues

> 'determined that no books would be used . . . for the first two months or so . . . in order that the material might be as appropriate as we could make it.'

Materials had to be produced concurrently with their teaching, and

> 'after the first two weeks the five staff . . . were totally exhausted.'

Many other ESP teams must have had similar experiences. How long can we expect practitioners of ESP to go on expending time and effort so prodigiously? Cannot proponents of ESP (or, better, experienced practitioners) construct a valid model for the provision of specific purpose English that is far less dependent upon particularities such as academic subject variables, so that more generally applicable materials can be widely used, thus removing at least some of the materials production burden from the teacher? One result of the frantic writing of materials, often on the spot, has been fatigue. Another not surprising consequence is that there are already signs of dissatisfaction with such materials. Teachers have found them difficult to enliven, and students have found them boring. One of my earlier questions may be relevant here: Might it not be possible to provide helpful materials which are **not** 'special subject-specific'?

Brumfit (1977) mentions as a 'less respectable factor' of ESP the fact that

> 'customers are willing and able to spend considerable sums of money on language courses'

and hints at the consequent potential dangers. He warns against allowing ESP to turn into a mere slogan. I do not wish to go deeply into the financial matters involved, but one should consider at least two factors. One is that publishers (local or otherwise) will not, after the first flush of enthusiasm about ESP, be willing to consider the small market provided by the 'one-off' ESP project. The other is that unless the results of ESP programmes match up to the amount of money spent on staffing, equipment and so on, the sponsoring institutions, agencies or governments will be unwilling to continue to support such programmes or to sponsor new ones.

But let us return to the demands made upon the ESP teacher. Perhaps the most worrying problem as far as he is concerned is how to reconcile his own level of knowledge of a specific subject (or occupation) with, on the one hand, the level of knowledge assumed by the textual materials he has to use and, on the other hand, the academic level already attained by his students. Of the staff of the University of Malaysia Language Centre (Report, op cit),

> 'no member had studied science beyond the school level',

and the report goes on to say that

> 'in view of the increasing demand for English for Science in the University, this gap will have to be filled'.

Are we, then, to demand that every ESP teacher be a polymath? The problem may be at its worst among teachers of EAP at University level in Britain, Since their students are normally post-graduates. Although the teacher himself in these cases may well be a graduate with one or two post-graduate qualifications, it will be sheer good fortune if he happens to be well-acquainted with one of the disciplines studies by some of his students.

The problems are obvious. If the teacher uses a text appropriate to the level of knowledge of his students, he may well fail to understand it fully and will, at the very least, feel insecure. For example, the student may offer a paraphrase of some part of the text ('Can I say instead . . .?') and the teacher may simply not know whether the paraphrase is valid. Again, as Johnson (1977) notes, there are

> 'errors which do not result in grammatically inaccurate sentences, but rather in sentences which do not mean what the writer intends them to mean'.

Will the ESP teacher always know what meaning his students intend? If, however, the teacher uses a lower-level text, the student may

a resent its **content**, recognising material that he has studied years before: and/or

b doubt, perhaps rightly, the **linguistic** relevance of such material.

Furthermore, the teacher is frequently unable (because of time-tabling restrictions, lack of staff and other administrative difficulties) to teach homogeneous subject groups. What is he to do about the learner's specific needs in such cases? How far should we expect him even to attempt to cater for his students' range of disciplines? White (1976) goes so far as to say

> 'that the EAP teacher should have an interest in the discipline whose student he is teaching'

as if the class was always homogeneous; and he adds that even this may not be enough since ESP involves what Flower (1966) calls

> 'the cultivation of a mode of thinking which cannot be the task of the English teacher alone but the result of co-operation between his science colleagues and himself'.

However, it has been suggested (Widdowson, 1975) that the ESP teacher's job is **not** to concern himself at all with scientific modes of thinking; that these are already present in the learner; and that they merely require the provision of another code, English, in which to express themselves:

> '. . . students will have already acquired some knowledge of the communicative systems of science which appear, pedagogically processed, in scientific subjects . . . This knowledge may hitherto have been acquired only through their own language. The English teacher's task is not to develop this knowledge but to demonstrate how it is realised through the medium of a different language'.

Nevertheless, the Malaysian report (op cit) suggests that students do have a problem

> 'with conventional ways of objective thinking; this has often been described as a problem of 'general logic'.'

Teachers in many territories have met this sort of problem, and it may be that the fault lies in the type of teaching practised, in schools and even at University level, in those regions: it may be typified by rote learning rather than learning by discovery, by prescription rather than description, by deduction rather than induction; and it may leave its mark even on the post-

graduate studying in Britain. White (op cit) may therefore be over-optimistic when he states

'The trained scientist . . . will already approach his work from the position of impersonality which Flower stresses as being fundamental to the scientist . . . .

Whatever the case, we are still left with the question: Is it the ESP teacher's responsibility to deal with **content** (including 'modes of thinking') as well as its expression? The question may sound absurd. How can the two be separated? A more concrete and specific instance of the general question might be: 'Do we want the ESP teacher to be in the position of commending (say) a piece of written work which the subject specialist will regard as nonsense? If this question is considered valid and if the answer is No, then the question arises: Should subject-specialist co-operation be built into all ESP programmes mounted for students who have an advanced knowledge of their own disciplines? It must be admitted, however, that such provision seems at the moment to be little more than a pious hope.

Answers to each of the questions already raised will inevitably influence decisions taken by the teacher as to how to proceed in the classroom. But because satisfactory answers have not yet been found, there seems to be very little in the way of practical guidance that can be offered. Phillips and Shettlesworth (op cit) are probably right in seeing the teacher as primarily an informant who must recognise the fact that his students know more about their subject than he does, and that if they are to be given adequate practice,

'the students will have to explain the subject to the teacher, the latter providing him with the linguistic means to do so . . .'.

But still, questions remain: Can he be relied upon to supply the precise means of expressing unambiguously a statement acceptable to his students' professional English-speaking peers and supervisors? And precisely **how** does the teacher organise such practice?

It has been a very unsatisfying task to have raised so many questions (some of them obvious) without suggesting constructive answers; it is also unsatisfying to know that even the questions are not formulated precisely enough. I hope I have not given the impression that my purpose has been destructive. My hope is that the right questions will be identified and satisfactory answers found soon, before our response to the demands of ESP leads us to expend more energy and more resources in what appears still in many cases to be an act of faith.

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Malta
South Africa
Thailand
United Arab Emirates

ARNOLD, J & HARPER, J
Advanced Writing Skills
Longman, 1978

Intended for teaching writing skills at advanced level this material is suitable for intensive and non-intensive courses and special provision is made for private study by the student. Language is treated under the three headings of 'functions', 'topic notions' and 'grammar', with the aim of training the student to express himself in writing clearly and accurately. A resource file at the back of the book provides stimulating material for further practice and revision.

BEESLEY, A R
English for your Business Career (No 3)
Collier Macmillan, 1977 £2.45

Third in a series of books intended for students of commerce who need English for written and spoken communication within a business context. Each lesson is built around a plan summarizing the items to be covered, reading passages and dialogues for comprehension, a section drilling specific structures and vocabulary, and grammar notes with exercises. There are progress tests throughout the book. A particular feature is the marginal notes which draw attention to language points of particular importance or difficulty.

BERMAN, M
Practice in the Conditional
Hodder & Stoughton, 1978 96pp £1.35

Features of this book are: a wide coverage (over 60 separate sentence patterns) of the three types of conditional, plus the most common uses of the subjunctive in everyday English; the inclusion of many colloquial and idiomatic phrases, very common in spoken English, but often ignored in textbooks; a large number of short comprehension passages, practice dialogues, exercises and drills that rehearse thoroughly the appropriate use of each pattern, thereby teaching their communicative and functional aspects; clear guidance on appropriate register, formality and context.

CANDLIN, E F
English In Style
Hodder & Stoughton, 1978 96pp Students Book £1.35
80pp Teacher's Book £1.95

This book has the following aims: to widen active and passive command of a more extensive English lexis and usage, through exposure to a wide variety of styles and registers taken from published sources; to revise, and build on previous knowledge of some of the more difficult English structures and idioms; to stimulate a critical awareness of the effects on language of a writer's medium, attitude, background, subject matter and target audience.

CURRAN, P
English Idiom Stories
Stanley Thornes (Publishers) Ltd, 1977 — £3.50 tape, £0.95 book

Sixteen short stories, each introducing a range of common use idioms. The idioms are graded in two categories, one of common idioms used in everyday conversation and the other of idioms less likely to be met in everyday conversation, but which should be recognised. The book also has a set of tests bases on the stories.

DAVIES, E & WHITNEY, N
Reasons For Reading
Heinemann, 1978 — 96pp Students Book; 32pp Teachers Book

This three-level reading comprehension course aims to help students to come to grips with reading comprehension. It is not concerned with testing comprehension through text and questions, but with contextualising what is read, and with building an increased awareness of the different features of written English discourse. It gives students the opportunity to transfer their study skills to the realia and literature of the new language.

GEDDES, M & STURTRIDGE, G
Listening Links
Heinemann, 1978 — Student's Book; Teacher's Book; Recorded Material

The 15 units of this book juxtapose listening with discussion skills. Taped extracts are played to groups of students, they complete tasks in their books which direct them to select what is relevant and omit what is not. They then exchange information about what they have heard and when the information from all the groups is fitted together a complete picture is formed.

General Introduction to A/V Education Publishing in Japan
British Council, 1976 — 85pp — £7.00, £7.50 (by post)

This is a document compiled for the British Book Display Centre in Japan (Aug 1976). It contains information about static materials, video programmes, 16 mm films, and audio tapes. It is available from Book Promotion Dept, 65 Davies St, London W1Y 2AA.

HILL, L A
Techniques of Discussion
Evans, 1978 £1.50

Designed for use in post-intermediate classes, this book offers a wide range of controversial material for discussion. Topics include women's liberation, the influence of the mass media, the voting age for children and violence in society. Each topic consists of a dialogue putting both sides of the argument, a passage expanding the arguments, exercises on selecting the salient points and questions for further discussion.

HORNBY, A S
Oxford Student Dictionary of Current English
Oxford University Press, 1978 774pp £1.95

This dictionary contains information on every aspect of written and spoken English. Features are Written English including: examples of usage, notes on alternatives, opposites and negatives where to divide words; Spoken English including phonetic transcriptions; English Grammar including notes on sentence structure and irregular verbs and plurals; English Style including idioms, slang and specialist vocabularies.

JORDAN, R R & MACKAY, R
A Handbook for English Language Assistants
Collins, 1977 £1.60

This book is intended primarily for TEFL teachers who are in posts in countries strange to them. The first part describes the preparations and the likely problems of such a post. The second part is a practical guide for ideas, examples and references after arriving at the school.

LINGUISTIC SYSTEMS ENGINEERING
Language Training Pack 1 – North Sea Challenge
BP Educational, 1977 Multi-Media Pack £102.00

This multi-media material is based on simulations materials pioneered by Bath University and BP Educational Service. The emphasis is on the practical application of language as it is used in presenting and resolving decision making situations. There are two components: (a) the decisions component – a common core of material, already in use in British schools and universities; (b) the Language Training Component – a direct application of the decisions component to the language learning situation. Stress is laid on the importance of the skills required to retrieve and interpret data presented in diverse forms as well as the skills needed to manipulate that information effectively.

LUGTON, J
Compact English
Nelson, 1977 75 p

Two entertaining books which encourage the use of the spoken language by presenting situations with which the student will be familiar. The situations are written in such a way as to ensure progressive coverage of all essential structures, and many notions and functions. Each book contains 30 or more units, on such subjects as cooking, shopping, travel, drawing and painting. Ideal for younger students.

McLEAN, A C
Horizons
Longman, 1978

This book provides practice in reading comprehension and composition for students in their last year at school or first year at university, and will be of particular interest to students in all parts of the Middle East. There are 10 units covering topics such as family life, women, education, economics and the Muslim past; each unit contains two contrasting passages of literature or journalism, followed by exercises in comprehension and language practice. All passages have been simplified, and there is a glossary of technical terms.

MALEY, A & DUFF, A
Variations on a Theme
Cambridge University Press, 1977 £2.10

An advanced oral/aural course consisting of a set of short dialogues built around a common theme. They are often ambiguous. The students are asked to interpret the dialogues, thus encouraging them to understand and use linguistic features which they might otherwise avoid. There is an accompanying cassette.

MARTIN, G, MAGNESS, C, GUDE, C
Holiday English
Mary Glasgow Press, 1978 Students Book £1.50
Teachers Book £1.00

A short holiday course for junior students attending vacation study centres in the UK. Produced in magazine form, this intensive course aims to develop communication skills, to provide interesting, discussion-provoking material which can be easily assimilated and used during a short stay in the UK.

MORGAN, M L & PERCIL, J J
Vital English
Macmillan, 1977 — Book £0.30; Tapes £7.50

Based on the 'notic nal' concept of language teaching, this book is designed for students at the beginners' to lower-inte: mediate levels. Each Notion (Time, Quantity, Design etc) is illustrated, providing interest and diversity of approach.

SWAN, M
Understanding Ideas
Cambridge University Press, 1978 — £1.85

A course in reading skills and comprehension for advanced students, which provides a selection of interesting texts from a wide range of sources, each followed by questions and exercises. The book offers more than just texts and exercises, because the author sets out to teach in a systematic and progressive way the reading techniques students at this level need to master. There is also a teacher's book and an accompanying cassette.

THOMPSON, L
Learning to Pronounce English
Evans, 1978 — Students Book £1.50; Teachers Book £1.90

This book aims to help learners of English first to identify and then to say the sounds of the language correctly. It contains a detailed examination of the sound and groups of sounds in English and stresses the importance of intensive listening, to enable students to recognise sounds and to place sound in its particular phonetic group. Practice drills cover repetition of minimal pairs, and use the difficult sounds in words and sentences both in isolation and contrast. There is a cassette to go with the book.

TTOFI, C
Freeway
Macmillan 1978 — 160pp — £2.50

Freeway is a 20-unit course consisting of practice material based on printed English that the student is likely to come across in everyday English life. Topics covered include Cartoon Humour, Theatres and Plays, Money and Banks, Working as an au pair, and equal opportunities. Each unit provides three hours of practice, with the vocabulary and grammatical structures linked to the themes contained in the reading passages. This book is intended for use on short intensive courses, but can also be used in normal classwork from intermediate levels upwards.

VINEY, P & HARTLEY, B
Streamline English
Oxford University Press, 1978 96pp Students Book £1.50
192pp Teachers Book £4.90

This is a 80-unit intensive English course intended for adult beginners. Each unit provides material for a 50 minute lesson and is illustrated with drawings or photographs in full colour. The material is graded and covers the elementary structures and vocabulary of English emphasising the development of aural/ oral skills. The book aims to give the student a command of simple English to enable him to communicate in an English speaking environment. There is an accompanying cassette containing recordings of the dialogues.

WIDDOWSON, H G
Teaching Language as Communication
Oxford University Press, 1978 £3.60

This book develops a rational approach to the teaching of language as communication based on a careful consideration of the nature of language and of the language user's activities. It provides a lucid guide through a subject which is often confused and misrepresented, while providing a stimulus to all language teachers to investigate the ideas that inform their own practices.

WINDSOR LEWIS, J
People Speaking
Oxford University Press, 1978 £1.90

A collection of many examples of living speech, in style broadly within modern educated colloquial British English. The content covers a wide range of subjects and situations. The text is presented in three ways: first in phonetic script, stress-marked; second, in ordinary spelling with simple intonation marks; thirdly, both in phonetic script and bearing more detailed intonation marking with additional information on rhythm and pauses. There is an accompanying cassette.

FILMS AND TAPES

BRITISH COUNCIL
Making the most of It £43.70

'The British Council has sponsored a new Slide/Tape production 'Making the most of It', intended for use during Induction Courses for students newly arrived from overseas. It emphasises – using voices of students and their advisers – ways in which students can help themselves overcome practical, cultural, emotional and academic problems and make full use of welfare and

social services available. It consists of 160 slides, sound cassette, script, copy of 'How to Live in Britain' and 'Overseas Students in Britain – Handbook'. The set can be ordered from Printing and Publishing Department of the British Council, 65 Davies Street, W1Y 2AA.

Activity Days In Language Learning
Colour/Comopt/27 mins/1977

This film shows an 'Activity Day' on an intensive English Language Course. It shows how the day is organised to cope with individual learner's needs, how and why students select activities for themselves, and how they carry out the various tasks. There are four activity rooms:

1 *The Listening Room*

Students choose from a selection of taped programmes differing in levels of difficulty, subject matter and type of task. Written instructions placed in each language laboratory booth tell them what they have to do.

2 *The Press Room*

A wide range of newspapers and magazines are provided and students either carry out tasks outlined on the blackboard or pursue their own particular interests.

3 *The Research Room*

Students select from a range of research tasks. Many of these are information gathering exercises based on bibliographies, indexes, dictionaries, timetables, professional journals and other reference material.

4 *The Games Room*

A wide range of games are available which students can play on their own, in pairs or in groups. There is a great deal of oral interaction between the students as they cope with the communication problems arising out of the games.

The teachers are Diana Basterfield, Jim Kerr, Gill Sturtridge and Marion Geddes who also planned the film.

The film was awarded a Diploma of Merit at the 14th International Festival of Didactic Television Films, Rome, Italy, May 1978.

The film is available from the following suppliers: (in Britain) National Audio Visual Aids Library, Paxton Place, Gipsy Rd, London SE17 9SR; (in USA) Great Plains National Instructional Television Library, Box 80669, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501, USA.

(Other overseas purchasers) Printing and Publishing Dept, The British Council, 65 Davies St, London W1Y 2AA.

Using Magazine Pictures in the Language Classroom
English Language Teaching Institute
The British Council

This lively film won a certificate of Merit at the 14th Chicago International Film Festival in 1975. It shows how a teacher using the modest visual resources afforded by pictures cut out of magazines can demonstrate elicit and control language, in an entertaining way. The teachers are Gill Sturtridge and Janet McAlpin. The film was directed by Gordon Severn and produced by Marion Geddes.

Using Tape Recorders in the Language Classroom
English Language Teaching Institute
The British Council

This practical and stimulating film shows how tape recorders can be used for listening comprehension. Two teachers have been filmed teaching real classes at the English Language Teaching Institute. They show two ways of preparing students for listening to and understanding an extended sample of English. The teachers are David Herbert and Janet McAlpin. The film was planned by Marion Geddes and produced by Piers Pendred.

A course for lecturers teaching on post initial training diploma-level courses in English as a Foreign Language was held on April 20 and 21 at the Institute of Education in the University of London. It was organised by the English as a Foreign Language Department with the assistance of the British Council. Issues discussed included the balance between educational and vocational elements in courses involving further training for EFL teachers, the design and teaching methods of such courses, the need for flexibility and individualised forms of instruction and the relation of the courses to those at the Master's level. Language problems of overseas students, even though teachers of English, were recognised and some solutions suggested. The British Council reported on their current position on both the supply of teachers from overseas wishing to take courses at this level and the employment prospects overseas of British teachers who complete them.

Subscribers to IATEFL should note the **new subscription rates:**

Subscribers living in the UK

1a	£3.50	Individual membership and Newsletter
1b	£8.30	Individual membership, Newsletter and ELTJ
1c	£12.00	Institutional membership – 4 copies of each Newsletter
1d	£21.60	Institutional membership – 4 copies of each Newsletter and 2 copies of each ELTJ

Subscribers living outside the UK

2a	£2.50	(US $5.50) Individual membership and Newsletter by surface mail
2b	£4.50	(US $9.00) Individual membership, Newsletter by air
3a	£7.30	(US $14.50) Individual membership, Newsletter and ELTJ by surface mail
3b	£9.30	(US $18.25) Individual membership, Newsletter by air, ELTJ by surface mail
3c	£11.50	(US $22.50) Individual membership, Newsletter and ELTJ by air
4a	£8.00	(US $16.00) Institutional membership – 4 copies of each Newsletter by surface mail
4b	£16.00	(US $31.00) Institutional membership – 4 copies of each Newsletter by air

4c	£16.75	(US $32.50) Institutional membership – 4 copies of each Newsletter and 2 copies of each ELTJ by surface mail
4d	£30.00	(US $57.50) Institutional membership – 4 copies of each Newsletter and 2 copies of each ELTJ by air

The subscription year runs from 1 September to 31 August. Applications received after May 31 are entered for the following year unless otherwise requested.

The British Council will run a course called **The Evaluation of Attainment in English as a Foreign Language with specific reference to English for Special Purposes.** The course will take place in Edinburgh from 1 to 12 April 1979. The aim of this course is two-fold. It will be concerned in general with the problems, principles and practice of designing, administering and evaluating the outcome of tests of English as a foreign language intended for students at secondary and adult level. It will be concerned in particular with tests of English for special purposes. The approach will be that of a high-level seminar and workshop. Recent developments, especially in the field of English for special purposes, will be covered in depth. It is hoped to include lectures, discussion and practical work in the following areas: objectives of language testing; constructing tests of different types; tests of aural-oral skills; tests for reading comprehension; tests of writing skills and assessment of essays; the place of testing in a European unit/credit scheme; recent developments in language testing; the impact of psycho-linguistics; aspects of test evaluation, including statistical analysis, reliability and validity.

Application forms can be obtained from the Representative, The British Council. Applicants for the time being resident in Britain and candidates from the United States of America should apply to the Director, Courses Department, The British Council, 65 Davies Street, London W1Y 2AA. Telephone number 01-499 8011. Application forms must be received in London by 15 November 1978.

Subscribers to **English Language Teaching Journal** are asked to note the new rates:

£5.50 in UK per year
£6.50 ($14.00) in USA per year
£1.70) single copies
$4.25)

ELT Documents. Themes for 1979 will be:

104 Dvelopments in the Training of Teachers of English
105 English in the Media
106 Syllabus and Project Design

Copies may be obtained singly (£2.00) or by subscription (£5.50) from Printing and Publishing Dept, The British Council, 65 Davies Street, London W1Y 2AA'

ELT documents

104 Developments in the training of teachers of English

ISBN 0 900229 65 9

This issue is devoted largely to the training of TEFL teachers in England. Articles include detailed descriptions of the courses at the universities of Manchester, Bangor, Edinburgh and Lancaster. The purpose of the issue is to provide information on current trends.

105 The use of the media in ELT

ISBN 0 900229 66 7

This issue will ask questions like 'Why Broadcast?' and 'Why do we use broadcasting in teaching?'. There will be articles on the production of material for broadcast and its practical application in the classroom. The supposed dichotomy between good production and good teaching will also be discussed.

106 Projects in materials design

ISBN 0 900229 67 5

A number of different projects from a variety (geographical and professional) of overseas institutions will be described by the planner or director concerned in each. Particular attention will be focussed on the problems which arose in each case, and how these affected the development of the project.

OTHER ETIC PUBLICATIONS

ETIC Occasional Paper English for Academic Study (1975)

ETIC Occasional Paper The Foreign Language Learning Process (1977)

ETIC Occasional Paper Pre-Sessional English Courses for Overseas Students (1978)

Information Guide No 1
English for Young Beginners (1976)

Information Guide No 2
English for Specific Purposes (1976) with Supplement (1978)

Information Guide No 3
Materials for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (1977)

Information Guide No 4
Aids to English Language Teaching (1976)

Information Guide No 5
Methodology of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (1977)

Information Guide No 6
Examinations and Tests in English for Speakers of Other Languages (1976)

Index to 25 years of English Language Teaching

Index to English Language Teaching 1972–1977 (Annotated)

Theses and Dissertations related to TESOL deposited with British Universities 1961–1975

Available by post from Printing and Publishing Department, The British Council, 65 Davies Street, London W1Y 2AA (01-499 8011). Personal callers may obtain them from the Language Teaching Library, 20 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1A 2BN.

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Towards individualisation

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